

1 LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
2 PUBLIC HEARING
3 FOR
4 PETROPLEX INTERNATIONAL, LLC
5 Petroplex International Tank Farm
6 (Greenfield Site)
7 Vacherie, St. James Parish, Louisiana

8 *****
9 This public hearing was held in connection
10 with the above captioned matter at the westbank
11 Reception Center, 2455 Highway 18, Vacherie,
12 Louisiana, on Thursday, March 26, 2009,
13 commencing at 6:00 p.m.

14 *****
15 BEFORE:
16 Tiffeny Suire Gallardo
17 Certified Court Reporter
18 In and For the State of
19 Louisiana

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2 FOR THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
3 QUALITY:

4 MR. ROGER WARD
5 HEARING OFFICER
6 P.O. BOX 4303
7 602 NORTH 5TH STREET
8 BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70802

9 FOR PETROPLEX INTERNATIONAL LLC:

10 MR. LARRY SCHIACCHETANO
11 1407 HIGHWAY 18
12 VACHERIE, LOUISIANA

13 ALSO PRESENT:

14 MS. SOUMAYA GHOSH
15 MR. CALVIN FAIR

3

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deqvac

REPORTER'S NOTE:
(ALL 18 EXHIBITS ARE IN THE POSSESSION OF DEQ)
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE 168

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. WARD:

Good evening. Let the Record reflect that the time is 6:00 p.m. My name is Roger Ward. I am an attorney with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. I will be

8 deqvac
serving as Hearing Officer this
9 evening, Thursday, March 26, 2009.
10 This hearing is scheduled to accept
11 public comments concerning the Proposed
12 Initial Synthetic Minor Source Air
13 Permit and the Associated Environmental
14 Assessment Statement (EAS) for
15 Petroplex International LLC, Petroplex
16 International Tank Farm (Greenfield
17 Site) 842 Main Street, Baton Rouge,
18 Louisiana, 70802; Agency Interest No.
19 159541, Permit No. 2560-00292-00, and
20 Activity Tracking No. PER20080001.
21 This site is located at 1407 Highway
22 18, Vacherie, Louisiana, St. James
23 Parish.
24 Petroplex International LLC
25 requested authorization for the

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5

1 following project:
2 The construction of a new marine
3 and land terminal facility. The
4 facility will supply a stable stock of
5 petroleum commodities to serve local
6 and regional refiners and distributors.
7 The facility will utilize a vapor
8 recovery system to reclaim loading
9 vapors. A thermal oxidizer will
10 control emissions of vapors not

11 degvac
recovered by the vapor recovery unit.
12 Emissions from storage of volatile
13 commodities will be reduced by the use
14 of domed external floating roof tanks.
15 A facility-wide Transfer and Storage
16 CAP, T/S CAP, is being created to
17 increase the operational flexibility at
18 the Petroplex Tank Farm. This CAP
19 includes all storage tanks, loading
20 operations, and the thermal oxidizer
21 (loading control device).

22 The EAS submitted by the applicant
23 addresses avoidances of potential of
24 real environmental effects, balancing
25 of social and economic benefits against

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6

1 environmental impact costs, and
2 alternative sites, projects, and
3 mitigative measures.

4 This permit was processed as an
5 expedited permit in accordance with LAC
6 33:I, Chapter 18.

7 This Hearing is not being conducted
8 in a question and answer format. Let
9 me repeat that again. This Hearing is
10 not being conducted in a question and
11 answer format. Please remember that
12 the purpose of this public hearing is
13 to allow you the public an opportunity

14 deqvac
15 to express your thoughts concerning the
16 Proposed Permit and the Associated
17 Environmental Assessment Statement. I
18 will allow all interested parties a
19 reasonable opportunity to comment,
20 unless testimony is not related to the
21 purpose of the hearing.

22 This Hearing is being held to give
23 all individuals a chance to be heard
24 regardless of their position on the
25 Proposed Permit and the Associated
 Environmental Assessment Statement.

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1 Courteous behavior is expected of
2 everyone at all times. You may speak
3 in support of, in opposition to, or
4 simply to provide additional
5 information. Your comments will be
6 evaluated and addressed in the
7 Louisiana Department of Environmental
8 Quality's written response.

9 A Public Notice advertising this
10 Public Hearing and Request for Public
11 Comment on the Proposed Permit and the
12 Associated EAS was published in the
13 Enterprise, Vacherie, Louisiana on
14 February 18, 2009. It also was
15 published in The Advocate, Baton Rouge,
16 Louisiana, and the News-Examiner of

17 deqvac
Lutcher, Louisiana on February 19,
18 2009.

19 A copy of the application, proposed
20 permit, statement of basis and EAS
21 (also known as "IT Questions") are
22 available for inspection and review at
23 the LDEQ, Public Records Center, Room
24 127, 602 North 5th Street, Baton Rouge,
25 Louisiana. Viewing hours are from 8:00

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1 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through
2 Friday, except on holidays.

3 The available information can also
4 be accessed electronically on the
5 Electronic Document Management System
6 (EDMS) on the LDEQ's public website at
7 www.deq.louisiana.gov.

8 Additional copies are also
9 available for review at the St. James
10 Public Library-Vacherie Branch, 2593
11 Hwy 20, Vacherie, Louisiana.

12 In addition, copies of the Public
13 Notice were mailed to individuals who
14 have requested to be placed on the
15 mailing list maintained by the LDEQ,
16 Office of Environmental Services on
17 February 17, 2009.

18 In accordance with the Louisiana
19 Administrative Code, Title 33, Part

23 deqvac
24 The Department is required to
25 provide up to 30 minutes to the permit
 applicant for an introductory

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10

1 presentation. Thereafter, preference
2 for speaking up to one hour is given as
3 follows: For the first hour, those
4 citizens who live within a two-mile
5 radius of the location of the facility.
6 For the second hour, those citizens who
7 work within a two-mile radius of the
8 location of the facility. And for the
9 third hour, those citizens who live
10 within the parish of the location of
11 the facility.

12 Thereafter, each hour of the
13 hearing shall alternate between those
14 who are in support of the Proposed
15 Permit and the Associated EAS and those
16 who are opposed to them.

17 The order of speakers for tonight's
18 hearing will be based on the
19 information provided by the speakers on
20 the registration forms. Anyone who
21 registered to speak but did not provide
22 the necessary information will be given
23 the opportunity to speak. However,
24 they will be called last in the order
25 of the registration.

1 This Hearing is being transcribed;
2 therefore, I will ask each speaker to
3 begin his or her comments by stating
4 for the Record the following: They must
5 state their name, their address, and
6 any organization he or she may
7 represent.

8 I also remind you to please turn
9 off or silence all cell phones.

10 So at this time, I would like for
11 the permit applicant's representative
12 to come forward and make your
13 introductory presentation.

14 (PRESENTATION)

15 BY MR. LARRY SCHIACCHETANO:

16 Good evening. My name is Larry
17 Schiacchetano. I'm the managing
18 partner and CEO of Petroplex
19 International. I'd like to make a few
20 comments about Petroplex
21 International's proposal for a facility
22 that will give 10 million barrels for
23 this facility.

24 Petroplex International proposes to
25 construct the new facility to provide

deqvac

1 additional tank storage capacity for
2 crude oil and refined products. The
3 facility will also provide storage for
4 bio-diesel and ethanol and the feed
5 stocks used to make these products in
6 light of the potential demand for
7 alternative fuels.

8 when fully constructed, the
9 facility will have a storage capacity
10 of 10 million barrels. And it will
11 provide significant benefits to the
12 local community, the state, and the
13 nation.

14 The experts agree that there is a
15 substantial need for additional
16 storage. In fact, there are 80 million
17 barrels currently on oil tankers around
18 the world looking for land-based
19 storage. The Petroplex facility will
20 help satisfy that need and will serve
21 as a necessary component of the
22 nation's energy supply chain. The
23 facility will also provide a tremendous
24 economic boost to the local community
25 and the state.

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1 The direct and indirect impacts of
2 the construction project is expected to
3 average 473 jobs in the River Parish

deqvac

4 region, which includes Ascension, St.
5 James, St. John, and St. Charles
6 Parishes and more than a thousand jobs
7 statewide over a 10 year period. The
8 overall economic impact of the
9 construction project is estimated to be
10 approximately \$718 million in the River
11 Parish region and slightly more than a
12 billion dollars at the state level.

13 Once operational, the facility is
14 expected to directly employ
15 approximately 68 to 70 people and
16 generate approximately 3,000 direct and
17 indirect jobs statewide by the tenth
18 year of operation. The direct and
19 indirect earnings impact of the
20 facility operations is estimated to be
21 about \$392 million for the River Parish
22 region over the first ten years of
23 operation.

24 The facility is also projected to
25 produce significant tax revenues for

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14

1 the local and state treasuries over the
2 ten years. The overall economic impact
3 in the River Parish regions over ten
4 years is close to \$2 billion. Overall
5 impact statewide is about \$2.7 billion.

6 The facility will also provide
Page 12

deqvac

7 important environmental benefits.
8 Because the current shortage of land-
9 based storage, crude oil or other
10 materials are often stored on barges on
11 the Mississippi River. This facility
12 will provide an alternative to barge
13 storage and hereby help reduce the risk
14 of barge accidents and spills in the
15 river. Also, air emissions from land-
16 based storage facilities are more
17 heavily regulated than barge emissions.

18 Petroplex will utilize state-of-
19 the-art emissions control measures.
20 Many of which provide greater controls
21 than required by law. Petroplex has
22 performed modeling of their emissions
23 from the facility even though it was
24 not required by regulations to do so.
25 The results demonstrate that even under

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15

1 worse-case operational scenarios, the
2 facility emission will comply with
3 ambient air standards.

4 Petroplex has also taken
5 significant measures to minimize the
6 effects to residents. Primary truck or
7 commercial traffic will occur via
8 Highway 3127 rather than River Road.
9 Also, although not in the best interest

deqvac

10 of Petroplex, the tanks are built back
11 from the dock space. Petroplex is
12 committed to planting double tree line
13 and to build an esthetic facility.

14 A number of years ago, I was
15 involved in a tank facility which had
16 ponds and fountains. We sent those
17 photos to URS and asked them to
18 duplicate that at our facility.

19 Petroplex plans to play an active
20 role in the community by supporting
21 local charities and efforts to improve
22 education and overall quality of life.
23 We are committed to being good
24 neighbors.

25 In summary, the Petroplex facility

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1 will help feed the nation's need for
2 additional land-based storage capacity.
3 It will be a state-of-the-art facility
4 that meets or exceeds all environmental
5 requirements. Petroplex is committed
6 to operating a safe, clean facility
7 that this community can be proud of.
8 We believe that being a successful
9 business and a good community neighbor
10 are not mutually exclusive.

11 On behalf of Petroplex, we
12 respectfully request that DEQ grant our

deqvac

13 permit. Thank you.

14 MR. WARD:

15 Thank you, sir. I will not being
16 by allowing all persons who have signed
17 up to speak for five minutes in which
18 to present their comments. Anyone who
19 needs more than five minutes will be
20 allowed to finish his or her comments
21 after all the registered speakers have
22 the opportunity to speak. I am going
23 to be exercising my discretion under
24 the Statute 3027 allowing public
25 officials to speak first. Therefore, I

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17

1 call Mr. Paul Aucoin.

2 (PUBLIC COMMENTS)

3 MR. PAUL AUCOIN:

4 Thank you. I appreciate the
5 opportunity to speak early. My name is
6 Paul Aucoin. My address is 134
7 Goodwill Plantation Road in Vacherie.
8 I'm here today representing the St.
9 James Parish Economic Development
10 Board. I serve as Chairman of that
11 Board. For the Record, the Board
12 consists of 19 volunteers who represent
13 the entire parish and they come from
14 all sectors of the parish. And at the
15 meeting held yesterday, March 25, the

deqvac

16 Board unanimously adopted a resolution
17 in support of this project. In
18 connection with that action by the
19 Board, I'd like to offer into the
20 Record this Resolution of Support from
21 the St. James Economic Development
22 Board.

23 The Board is well aware of the
24 concerns of citizenry. And that's why
25 we encourage this process that's taking

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1 place tonight. If we have faith in our
2 process and trust that the results of
3 these hearings will bear out whether or
4 not the project can proceed. With
5 that, I thank you.

6 MR. WARD:

7 I call next, Jason Amato.

8 MR. JASON AMATO:

9 Good evening. My name is Jason
10 Amato. I live at 1168 Marquette Drive
11 in Lutcher, Louisiana. I am the
12 Councilman for District 2, and also,
13 Lutcher Fire Chief. In my spare time,
14 I work for Shell Chemical in Geismer.
15 I worked over there for 23 years
16 working in operations, maintenance, and
17 safety, turnarounds. And now I'm back
18 in operations management. I've been on

deqvac

19 parish council for a little over a
20 year. And I truly have enjoyed my time
21 on the council serving the residents of
22 St. James Parish. People ask me how is
23 it being a councilman. And I have to
24 say it's a little tougher than I
25 thought.

□

19

1 St. James Parish is a wonderful
2 place to live and an attractive place
3 to locate a business. For me, it's
4 tough ensuring to strike the right
5 balance between our resident's quality
6 of life and our parish's need for
7 economic development. Without quality
8 of life, our residents have no desire
9 to live here. Without economic
10 development, our residents have no
11 means to support living here. So there
12 has to be a balance.

13 As Parish Councilman, I've been
14 clear and insistent in my message to
15 those seeking economic development
16 opportunities in St. James parish. You
17 want to do business here in St. James
18 Parish, you have to follow the rules.
19 The same rules Motiva follows. The
20 same rules Chevron Phillips follow.
21 The same rules Imperial Sugars follows.

deqvac

22 You have to be good stewards of our
23 environment and welcome neighbors in
24 our community.

25 Tonight I do appreciate Petroplex

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1 holding this public hearing. I am all
2 too aware that Louisiana Revised
3 Statute 30-2018E states that minor
4 source projects are not required to
5 hold public hearings. I also
6 appreciate Petroplex coming before our
7 Parish Council recently to review their
8 project with us and for giving us a
9 book with detailed documentation.

10 However, all the information in the
11 book, the most important information to
12 me, was still missing. We still need
13 to review the report by URS on a worse-
14 case scenario for fire and/or
15 explosion. Working in industry all
16 these years, you can talk about your
17 emission recovery devices and your
18 economic benefits to our community, but
19 to me it's a worse-case scenario that
20 keeps me awake at night. Some people
21 say it's only a tank farm.
22 Unfortunately, a little over two weeks
23 ago up the road in Vacherie it was only
24 a pipeline. And on that tragic day,

deqvac

25 one gentleman was killed and two others

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21

1 were seriously injured.

2 As the crow flies, I live
3 approximately 6,000 feet from the edge
4 of Petroplex property line. I know we
5 have residents here tonight who live a
6 lot closer. So tonight, I ask our
7 friends at DEQ to remain diligent in
8 their duties and seek the URS record.
9 Review it for it's worse-case scenario,
10 validate it, and add the summary to the
11 permitting decision. At the end of the
12 day, as Parish Councilman, as a Fire
13 Chief, and as a resident of St. James
14 Parish, when all things are equal
15 between our resident's quality of life
16 and our parish economic development, I
17 will chose quality of life. And I
18 submit this paperwork for Public
19 Record. Thank you.

20 MR. WARD:

21 Next, I have Mr. Kim Brass.

22 MR. KIM BRASS:

23 Good evening. My name is Kim
24 Brass. I'm the District 6 Councilman
25 here in St. James Parish. My address

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1 is 2381 Armant Street, Vacherie,
2 Louisiana 70090.

3 I would first like to thank the
4 representatives from the Louisiana
5 Department of Environmental Quality for
6 hosting the facility for this hearing.
7 Also, I would like to thank the
8 Petroplex representative for making the
9 decision to have a public hearing and
10 for their cooperation with parish
11 council's process. Most importantly,
12 I'd like to thank the residents of the
13 6th District, St. James Parish, and
14 surrounding areas for voicing your
15 opinions whether for or against,
16 throughout this process and especially
17 tonight at this public hearing.

18 I am excited about tonight because
19 this public hearing will follow allow
20 DEQ, elected officials, community
21 leaders, concerned citizens, and all
22 residents to get a true overall picture
23 of the public in reference to the
24 proposed development. I would like to
25 encourage each of you tonight to please

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1 participate in this public hearing by

2 deqvac
3 giving your oral testimonies and by
4 submitting your comments to DEQ, who is
5 the governing body of the Air Permit
6 process for the State of Louisiana.

7 To DEQ, I would like to ask that
8 you please take into consideration all
9 the presentations and comments that are
10 given tonight before making a final
11 decision. In addition, I would like to
12 ask that you pay close attention to all
13 air and safety requirements, so that
14 whatever your ultimate decision may be,
15 that we maintain a level of
16 environmental quality here in Vacherie.

17 Finally, to residents of St. James
18 Parish. I would like to ensure you
19 that both the Parish President and the
20 Parish Council are committed to
21 developing a Smart Grow Plan for St.
22 James Parish. We have allocated
23 \$75,000.00 in this year's budget to
24 start a process for developing a
25 comprehensive Smart Grow Plan. With
 the help of St. James Parish residents,

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24

1 we will bridge the gap between industry
2 and community. Thank you.

3 MR. WARD:

4 Next, I have Nikkie Monica.

deqvac
MR. NIKKIE MONICA:

Thank you very much and good evening. I am State Representative Nikkie Monica. My address is 298 Dorel Lane, Laplace, Louisiana. I have a prepared statement that I will submit for the Record. I have some comments after. As State Representative, I have many duties to both create jobs and expand our tax base in the State of Louisiana.

Today, I want to testify that I am in support of the proposed Petroplex International Tank Farm in Vacherie, Louisiana. This facility will generate tax dollars to fund our schools, much needed public works projects, and also additional funds for police and fire protection for St. James Parish. It will also create jobs during the construction phase and during the

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operations phase and after. And during these economic times, it is very important we have industry that wants to locate in our area.

As you know, the Mississippi River is one of our greatest natural resources. I'm one of few elected

8 officials^{deqvac} that worked in industry for
9 20 years before I became Parish
10 President. And we've come a long way
11 in our minds and our permit process.
12 And I want to commend the DEQ on that.
13 Inside the gates is not a bad place to
14 be. If you look around this room, I
15 bet you three quarters of us in this
16 room either made a living in industry,
17 have a niece, or nephew, or son in the
18 industry, or ourselves. That's why I
19 stand here tonight, you know, tax base
20 and jobs is the most important thing
21 you can do as an elected official.

22 Tonight, I'm supporting Petroplex
23 in that endeavor. Thank you.

24 MR. WARD:

25 The last public official I have is

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26

1 Wilson Marlborough.

2 MR. WILSON MALBROUGH:

3 Good evening. My name is Wilson
4 Marlborough. I represent District 3,
5 St. James Parish on the Council. You
6 know, I see this room is packed with a
7 good bit of people here. I'm not sure
8 you're for or against it. But I can
9 tell you what, Mr. Amato summed it up
10 very well tonight. Probably took most

11 degvac
of the words out of my speech. So I'll
12 just do it ad-lib. And that is the
13 quality of life in St. James Parish.

14 Mr. Brass also mentioned about a
15 comprehensive master plan. A plan
16 designed how we build St. James Parish
17 from today on. How the future will
18 look. How will it look 5, 10, 15, 20
19 years from now. What will be placed
20 where. How will it be buffered out to
21 commercial and dealing with residents.
22 That all will be able to come into St.
23 James Parish and work together, fit
24 together and that we can all have a
25 substantial quality of life.

□

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1 Today, I can stand here and look at
2 that map. I just passed the site
3 coming here. I can't honestly say in
4 my heart that it is the best location.
5 That location is determined more about
6 the residents who live there and DEQ by
7 looking at the amount of emissions,
8 looking at the requirements, listening
9 to all the facts of not only Petroplex,
10 but for the residents that are
11 concerned in that area. Mr. Monica
12 mentioned something about taxes and
13 jobs. He's so right. Every elected

14 deqvac
official jobs, their most important
15 thing that they're after is to try to
16 get everyone employed within the
17 parish. We don't want unemployment.
18 We hate to see anybody have to depend
19 on the unemployment system that may
20 even get cut by stimulus dollars that
21 we owe when it comes out because the
22 economy today.

23 And as much as I can tell you we
24 need the jobs, we need to be cautious
25 of the environment. I'm looking at DEQ

28

1 as I say this because their jobs are
2 probably tougher than ours. They have
3 to determine by listening to these
4 elected officials here, by listening to
5 you as you come up and speak tonight,
6 whether you're for or against it.
7 That's the freedom we all have. That's
8 freedom should say that you guys
9 wouldn't mind having it or wouldn't
10 want it or you need it for jobs. That
11 is definitely important.

12 I can't say as a tank farm, that is
13 much different than any other industry.
14 That also has to be taken into
15 consideration. The final rest goes in
16 the hands of DEQ when they weigh the

17 facts of ^{deqvac} how does it fit in the area
18 that is proposed. What is the current
19 surroundings around that area? And
20 what would happen there in the future?
21 I wish we had that comprehensive
22 master plan in my hand right now.
23 Because then I will feel confident to
24 tell you that it was planned. It was
25 well thought out. It was brought to

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1 the public for comment. It was brought
2 to the officials for public comment.
3 And through all that process, we come
4 up and set a plan in place. Put a map
5 on a piece of paper and said this is
6 where we're going to put it. This,
7 that and the other. We don't have that
8 today. I pushed that for a few years
9 on the council. As Mr. Brass
10 mentioned, we have the funding
11 allocated this year and we are going to
12 be starting on such a plan. I guess
13 it's better late than never, the plan.
14 But it's not there yet.

15 So I couldn't stand here and look
16 each and every one of you and tell you
17 that I think that's the best place for
18 that. Would I like to see it here for
19 the jobs and tax? Yes, I would.

20 Because that is one of our primary
21 causes. But does it fit. I wish I had
22 more of a professional opinion, not
23 elected person opinion, not just my
24 opinion because of where I live. I
25 would like to see a more professional

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1 opinion with a lot of thought process,
2 lot of details put together. We are
3 seeing more and more of this question
4 mark type of industry coming in,
5 whether or not we should accept it or
6 not, whether or not the public sees
7 it's the right place or not. And in
8 some cases, it's not a problem. In
9 some cases, it's a problem.

10 But the plan we put in place, all
11 of you would know. It would be public
12 availability to it. You could go in
13 and see where those proposals have been
14 put in place. How has the land use
15 restrictions they put in place.

16 The only thing I can end with
17 tonight is that asking that DEQ give a
18 fair and just look at all the details
19 of the elected officials, look at all
20 the details of Petroplex's proposal,
21 look at all the details of the public
22 opinions. And that we make a decision.

23 ^{deqvac}
not only based on economics, not only
24 based on taxes, not only based on jobs,
25 but make sure we also include the

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1 concern of the residents here tonight.
2 I would hope with the much input we
3 have here tonight, a solid decision
4 could be made.

5 We have a 19 member Board of
6 Economic Development said they made a
7 unanimous choice. I respect that
8 Board. That's their job. They support
9 what we believe in: jobs and taxes. We
10 need the money. We need to put people
11 to work. We need to stop seeing our
12 children leave out the parish, leave
13 out the state. But we got to look at
14 how do we do it and at what cost.
15 That's all I have. Thank you.

16 MR. WARD:

17 Are there any other public
18 officials who would like to speak?

19 (No verbal response.)

20 Then I'll move into the category of
21 people who live within a two-mile
22 radius of the location of the facility.
23 The first person is Bernie Matherne.

24 MR. ERNIE MATHERNE:

25 Good evening. My name is Ernie

1 Matherne. MY address is 3251 LA Hwy
2 3125, which is right across the river
3 from the facility. I come here in
4 favor of the project in support of the
5 project. Being a business located
6 within the parish, looking at the
7 economic times of the country, in St.
8 James Parish, we are pretty fortunate.
9 In Louisiana, we are fortunate that we
10 have a pretty decent form of government
11 and just everything we need to move
12 forward.

13 I would like to state my support
14 for it and let's get it going.

15 MR. WARD:

16 The next person is Whitney
17 Hickerson.

18 MR. WHITNEY HICKERSON:

19 I'm Whitney Hickerson, 2127
20 Franklin Street, Vacherie, Louisiana.
21 I'm a retired chemical worker. I work
22 for the Dupont Chemical Company for 37
23 years. During my tenure at Dupont, I
24 made a good living for myself and my
25 family.

deqvac

1 With the Petroplex storage facility
2 coming to Vacherie and the surrounding
3 areas, it will bring construction and
4 permanent jobs that are so badly needed
5 for this area. Petroplex will also, in
6 my opinion, help the economy of this
7 area. It will wake up it's stagnant
8 community. With the Petroplex coming,
9 other businesses will follow and
10 Vacherie will grow. I support
11 Petroplex International. And I want to
12 submit this statement for the Record.

13 MR. WARD:

14 My next speaker is Lionel Bailey.

15 MR. LIONEL BAILEY:

16 My name is Lionel Bailey. I reside
17 at 12210 Magnolia Street in Gramercy,
18 Louisiana. My home is approximately
19 6.7 miles from the proposed facility.
20 However, when one considers the air
21 pollutants, I'm well within the two-
22 mile radius of the proposed facility.
23 I'm here as a parishioner of St. James
24 Parish and as an environmental
25 professional. I am what is considered

□

34

1 a National Registered Environmental
2 professional, a Registered
3 Environmental Manager, Certification

deqvac

4 No. 10068. I have worked for over 34
5 years in the environmental arena. I've
6 worked with various industries along
7 the industrial corridor from Baton
8 Rouge to New Orleans. My professional
9 experience included environmental
10 permitting of air, water, waste, and
11 remediation projects.

12 I also worked with the Louisiana
13 Department of Environmental Quality as
14 a supervisor in the water division in
15 the early 80s. Having worked as a
16 National Environmental Act expert for
17 the strategic petroleum reserve which
18 crude oil products are stored
19 underground, I want to emphatically
20 mention my strong support of Petroplex
21 in their efforts in locating St. James
22 Parish.

23 I spent time reviewing the
24 Petroplex air permitting application
25 against the Louisiana Administrative

□

35

1 Code 33, regarding air emissions. To
2 verify compliance with the national air
3 quality standards, to verify compliance
4 with the new source performance
5 standards, PSD, and national emission
6 standards for air pollutants. within

deqvac

7 my review, I found Petroplex to be a
8 minor source to be regulated under
9 Chapter 51 of the Louisiana
10 Administration Code 33 for air
11 pollutants. The facility emission is
12 also well below the criteria pollutants
13 for air emissions limit units.

14 I also spent time reviewing the
15 surrounding infrastructures: Air,
16 water, roadways, railway, piping. And
17 found Petroplex to be an exceptional
18 facility for the location selected.

19 Therefore, I strongly recommend
20 LDEQ, the Federally authorized agent to
21 issue without prejudice, the permit
22 requested by Petroplex.

23 MR. WARD:

24 My next registrant is Jeff
25 Dufresne.

□

36

1 MR. JEFF DUFRESNE:

2 Hello. My name is Jeff Dufresne.
3 I live at 1166 St. James Street in
4 Vacherie. I represent myself, my wife,
5 and my 13-year old son. I want to let
6 everybody know that I'm opposed to this
7 facility in a big way. I live about
8 one inch from the project site. And
9 that's close enough for me. I've

deqvac

10 worked in the chemical industry for
11 several years. I've worked in the
12 strategic petroleum reserve for St.
13 James. I know a little bit about crude
14 oil and how it smells and the vapors it
15 gives off. I attended LSU Firefighting
16 training school in order to know how to
17 react for a fire. It's nothing nice.
18 I only know that technology is that
19 much better now than when it was when I
20 worked for SPR.

21 I'm in fear of what could happen.
22 The wind is blowing predominantly from
23 the south as they are now these last
24 few days will blow right over me and
25 all of my neighbors right here in this

□

37

1 little community. Matter of fact, the
2 bright side is when the wind is blowing
3 from the east, it's going to blow on my
4 neighbors on the other street. There's
5 no benefit for us. We've lived here
6 all our lives. I've worked in the
7 chemical industry. I didn't want a
8 good job in a plant. I wanted to get
9 away from a plant. That's why I moved
10 where I'm at. I could live other
11 places and do other things.

12 I worked for agriculture. I worked
Page 33

deqvac

13 for farmers. I enjoy seeing the green
14 sugarcane fields and meeting with the
15 farmers who are there representing what
16 I think are the best people on the face
17 of the earth. This thousand acres or
18 so that's going to go out, it's a
19 waste. For what? Just to put us at
20 risk. I don't want it. I can't see
21 anything that anybody could tell me
22 could make me for it. It's strictly a
23 matter of safety in the proximity of
24 the neighbors that we all know, our
25 family and friends. We don't want to

□

38

1 move. I don't know what's going to
2 happen, maybe nothing. But you heard
3 in the news last week, like some other
4 gentlemen said, the strategic petroleum
5 reserve blew up. Somebody got killed.
6 It can get a lot worse than that.

7 All my friends I'm sure have other
8 comments to make. My comment. I want
9 to repeat. I'm against it. I'll
10 always be against it.

11 MR. WARD:

12 Kyle Prestenback.

13 MR. KYLE PRESTENBACK:

14 Good evening. My name is Kyle
15 Prestenback. I live at 1234 St. James

deqvac

16 Street. I'm representing myself. I'm
17 strongly opposed to the construction of
18 Petroplex Tank Farms. Let me first
19 say, I'm not opposed to industry. I've
20 worked in industry for about 10 years.
21 But recently decided to pursue other
22 career paths. Most of my family have
23 worked there for years and have
24 provided for them and myself a good
25 life. But I'm opposed to the proposed

□

39

1 location of the Petroplex Tank Farm.
2 As presented to us on the front
3 page of The Enterprise a couple of
4 months ago, and you see it pictured
5 here above the stage. They showed us a
6 pretty picture of what the proposed
7 tank farm would look like. Pretty
8 white tanks surrounded by green fields,
9 big tall trees, two ponds in the front.
10 It's easy and cute to put such on
11 paper, but I've never seen any tank
12 farm or any other industrial site look
13 that attractive, even the ones owned
14 and operated by major established
15 financial security companies.
16 That leads me to believe that this
17 is propaganda to get their foot in the
18 door. They're not bound to provide any

deqvac

19 aesthetic enhancements they're
20 promoting. Once established, industry
21 attempts to expand, get bigger and
22 bigger and consume more and more land.
23 People living close by move away and
24 more property is consumed by industry.
25 Once permitted and operational,

□

40

1 Petroplex can modify operations, expand
2 operations, or do whatever it wishes to
3 get submittal and approval of permit
4 applications.

5 The proposed tank farm will equip
6 about 250 acres, yet the property they
7 are planning on buying is about 1700
8 acres, with 1000 acres of clear and
9 readily available land ready for
10 development. So what is Petroplex's
11 future intentions for the remaining
12 underdeveloped land? Will the entire
13 Homeplace Plantation one day be filled
14 to capacity with tanks, production
15 facilities, or other industrial
16 services. After all, they are not in
17 business to farm sugarcane, grow grass
18 and trees. They're in business to
19 store, move, blend, possibly produce
20 alternative fuels, and possibly provide
21 other environmental services to the

deqvac

22 neighboring industries.

23 If this does happen, this will be a
24 major industrial area, similar to the
25 other areas up and down the Mississippi

□

41

1 River. In the Supplemental
2 Environmental Assessment Statement
3 submitted to DEQ, Petroplex had to
4 explain why this site was chosen over
5 other sites. 13 sites were evaluated
6 and two were chosen and met Level I
7 criteria. Homeplace and Cobin property
8 in St. Charles Parish. The Cobin
9 property is a great deal bigger than
10 Homeplace, which was a deterrent for
11 further consideration. What's stirred
12 up the most to me during the Level II
13 more detailed evaluation of the two
14 properties was that one of the
15 criterias to be considered was
16 problematic local parish or municipal
17 zoning or buffer zone requirements.
18 The Cobin site in St. Charles Parish is
19 subject to a 2,000 foot buffer zone
20 requirement, which limits use of
21 property. In St. James parish, there's
22 no such zoning and buffering
23 requirements. It makes the Homeplace
24 Plantation property more attractive to

deqvac

25 industry, but really bad for citizens

□

42

1 and residents living near to the
2 facilities.

3 An almost identical facility was
4 permitted on January 3, 2008 to be
5 built in Garyville, the Angelina Tank
6 Farm. But to this day has not been
7 built for unknown reasons. Some of the
8 investors involved in Petroplex Tank
9 Farm were involved in the Angelina tank
10 Farm project. So why has this facility
11 not been built yet, if the demand for
12 such a facility is so high.

13 Also in this EAS, Petroplex stated
14 that the facility is not expected to
15 have any adverse effects on property
16 values. The facility will be designed
17 and operated to minimize or eliminate
18 any possible adverse effects of
19 residents located east and west of the
20 facility. In light of these facts,
21 minimal impact of the facility from an
22 environmental standpoint and the
23 significant social and economic impacts
24 to the facility, it is anticipated that
25 the facility may have a positive impact

□

1 on property values.

2 Now, what type of study did they
3 use to come up with these numbers with
4 this statement. I found it hard to
5 believe that my property value and my
6 neighbor's property values will
7 possibly go up when you've got 10
8 million barrels, which is 420 million
9 gallons of flammable, explosive
10 materials stored in our backyards. I
11 just don't believe this and would like
12 to see data supporting this statement.

13 Also in it's EAS, Petroplex stated
14 that Petroplex believes there are no
15 daycare centers, hospitals, prisons, or
16 food storage areas in close proximity
17 to the site. The nearest school is
18 believed to be Sacred Heart Elementary
19 School located approximately three
20 miles from Homeplace Plantation. After
21 a quick search on the internet, we
22 found six schools and two daycare
23 centers within a two-mile radius of
24 Homeplace Plantation. For something as
25 important as EAS and permit process,

□

1 Petroplex did not even take the time to

2 deqvac
get adequate research to find this
3 easily accessible information.
4 On Petroplex's website, Petroplex
5 mentions advanced environmental
6 services component to be built during
7 Phase I construction. This component
8 will have multiple import sources from
9 tanks, ships, barges, rails, and trucks
10 and will possibly grow into a strong
11 viable business segment in its own
12 right. What exactly is this advanced
13 environmental service component?
14 There's no details given. What can we
15 expect in the future from a health
16 environmental standpoint from this
17 business entity? Also on the website,
18 Petroplex will have a wastewater
19 treatment system capable of handling
20 240,000 gallons per day of wastewater.
21 Will Petroplex be in the business of
22 receiving and treating wastewater from
23 other locations on this site? If so,
24 where will all this wastewater be
25 coming from? What type of pollutants

□

45

1 will be contained in this wastewater?
2 If Petroplex does locate here,
3 Petroplex won't be good neighbors
4 within this community. They can locate

5 deqvac
the proposed tank farm behind the
6 railroad tracks, even though this would
7 not be the optimum location from
8 Petroplex's operational economic
9 standpoint. After all, they have
10 plenty of land to do this. It will
11 require more piping and associated
12 facilities. Looking at the big
13 picture, the extra piping and
14 associated facilities are pretty small
15 compared to the projected completed
16 project cost of over \$1 billion.

17 I think this would make the
18 neighboring communities more accepting
19 of the proposed facility and would not
20 generate too hostile communities. It
21 would significantly reduce hazards from
22 toxic chemicals, hazards from
23 explosions or fires, light pollution,
24 noise, etc. Petroplex stated in their
25 presentation to the parish council a

□

46

1 couple of months ago that they may have
2 to readily engineer all fire and
3 explosion hazards through state-of-the-
4 art biotechnology that they cannot
5 engineer all human errors, negligence
6 or possible terrorist attacks.

7 For the reasons stated, I'm

8 deqvac
strongly opposed to Petroplex Tank
9 Farm. Thank you.

10 MR. WARD:

11 Carol Waguespack.

12 MS. CAROL WAGUESPACK:

13 Good evening. I'm Carol
14 Waguespack, 1118 St. James Street in
15 Vacherie. I live next door to the
16 proposed facility. Contrary to what
17 many people might think, I'm not
18 against Petroplex, but just not in this
19 location. It's true the community
20 needs jobs. It's probably true the
21 community needs storage. But we have
22 just lost two opportunities for large
23 industry to come into areas of the
24 parish which really wanted them.

25 This facility is coming into a

□

47

1 residential area. 30 years ago we were
2 promised zoning which would have helped
3 the owners of the property and
4 ourselves better prepare for our
5 future. This was not done and it is
6 now proposed to being done. If it is
7 done, then property owners will have a
8 right to sell their property to
9 appropriate people. Homeowners can
10 plan their lives.

degvac
11 As of right now, we are totally at
12 the mercy of an industry that DEQ
13 regulates but cannot totally control.
14 Yesterday, in the Times Picayune, on
15 the second page, there was an article
16 which I would like to put into the
17 Record about the refineries and their
18 accidental emissions. A \$800,000.00
19 grant was given to the EPA
20 Environmental Justice small grants to
21 help those people who live next door to
22 use buckets to collect the emissions
23 that EPA and DEQ cannot do because
24 they're not planned emissions. They
25 began when the facilities start and

□

48

1 closed down projects as well as other
2 accidents.

3 I'm asking that DEQ allow the
4 Parish Council and the parish to plan
5 better land use. And that at that
6 time, they be given a moratorium on
7 development until this is done. Thank
8 you.

9 MR. WARD:

10 My next registered speaker is Dr.
11 Roland Waguespack, Jr.

12 DR. ROLAND WAGUESPACK, JR.

13 I'm Dr. Roland Waguespack, Jr. I

14 degvac
live on the corner of River Road and
15 St. James Street. I'm probably going
16 to be more impacted by this than anyone
17 else here tonight. Again, I'm not
18 opposed to industry or Petroplex or
19 anyone else coming into the parish. We
20 all could use more jobs and increase
21 tax base. But I am opposed to this
22 location.

23 If I could approach the map, I'll
24 show you where I am. This is my office
25 right here, St. Phillip Clinic. The

□

49

1 office has been there since 1960. My
2 home is right behind it. It was built
3 in 1960. There's a community swimming
4 pool here, which was founded in 1967.
5 This group of trees here, my family
6 owns part of that. That's an old sugar
7 mill site.

8 I feel I am greatly impacted by
9 this. We have enough respiratory
10 problems in this area. The River
11 Region has been called "cancer alley"
12 for good reason over the years between
13 Baton Rouge and New Orleans. I would
14 venture to say probably noone here has
15 not had a family member with cancer.
16 Benzine is highly volatile products are

17 deqvac
known carcinogens.

18 So again I would like to see
19 Petroplex come, but to a different
20 location. Thank you.

21 MR. WARD:

22 The next speaker I have is John
23 Frazier.

24 MR. JOHN FRAZIER:

25 Hello. My name is John Frazier. I

□

50

1 live at 1299 Highway 18, Vacherie.
2 I've been a resident of the parish for
3 20 years. I don't want to give up my
4 quality of life. And I oppose to
5 Petroplex coming in the area. And also
6 my son has asthma. And where I live at
7 it's quiet, peaceful. I leave my
8 windows up. My kids play in the yard.
9 I don't want to give up my right to
10 have a nice peaceful area. I'm here
11 representing me, my family, and I ask
12 that DEQ reconsider. Thank you.

13 MR. WARD:

14 Casey Amadie.

15 MR. CASEY AMADIE:

16 My name is Casey Amadie. I live at
17 1235 Simon Street, which is
18 approximately 1200 feet from the
19 proposed Petroplex site. I'm afraid of

20 storing and ^{deqvac}blending toxic materials
21 will do to the health of not only my
22 family, but my friends and neighbors as
23 well. I have two young children. I
24 would like them to be able to enjoy the
25 fresh air and beautiful environment

□

51

1 that now exists. I believe there is
2 not a need for this facility at this
3 location. For these reasons and many
4 more, I am strongly opposed to
5 Petroplex International facility.

6 MR. WARD:

7 Next is Mr. Bryan Chauvin.

8 MR. BRYAN CHAUVIN:

9 My name is Bryan Chauvin. I live
10 at 1187 Simon Street in Vacherie with
11 my wife and son. The proposed
12 Petroplex International site is only
13 400 yards away from our home. I am
14 opposed to this facility located near
15 my home of 21 years. I fear that this
16 facility will change my quality of life
17 and the quality of life of my family
18 and neighbors.

19 I'm concerned that the noise and
20 smells of this site will disturb the
21 peaceful country living I enjoy today.
22 I'm also concerned that rain water

23 degvac
runoff from this facility could
24 potentially harm our beautiful waters
25 we enjoy for fishing and boating.

□

52

1 Another concern that I have is that the
2 facility will continue to expand and
3 further disturb our peaceful way of
4 life. For these reasons, I strongly
5 oppose the Petroplex International
6 facility.

7 MR. WARD:

8 Next is Ethel Recatto.

9 MS. ETHEL RECATTO:

10 My name is Ethel Recatto. My
11 address is 1190 St. James Street. The
12 proposed Petroplex International site
13 is in my backyard. The storage of
14 toxic materials will be too close to
15 residential areas in our community.
16 This facility will alter land use and
17 subsequently damage the quality of life
18 in Vacherie forever. For these reasons
19 stated and many more, I am strongly
20 opposed to the Petroplex International
21 facility in our area. Thank you.

22 MR. WARD:

23 Next is Allen Hymel.

24 MR. ALLEN HYMEL:

25 My name is Allen Hymel. I live at

1 1189 St. James Street. I live about
2 200 feet from the facility. I worked
3 in the industry already, so I know what
4 it is. I saw Taft, Louisiana go from a
5 nice community to a junkyard. They
6 left the cemetery in Taft. They moved
7 the church and put a fence around it.
8 People go there to see their loved ones
9 and they have to jump a fence almost.
10 I don't want to see that happen to
11 vacherie because I can see the church
12 in vacherie, this small church,
13 struggling to stay there. And once the
14 people that are bought out that was
15 promised to be bought out, move. Some
16 young ones are going to move out and
17 not move in. Like Mr. Akerson said,
18 vacherie gonna grow. St. James is not
19 growing. They keep putting up more
20 tanks, more tanks.

21 what's going to happen across the
22 river in Convent. The same is
23 happening. People don't live in
24 Convent anymore. They don't live in
25 St. James. They not going to stay in

deqvac

1 vacherie. They gonna move.
2 Personally, if the plant comes here,
3 I'm moving.

4 Some of these numbers that
5 Petroplex has put up. My great
6 grandfather once owned all this place
7 where the tanks are. Engineers said we
8 needed 400 acres to put the 86 tanks.
9 In front of the railroad track is
10 exactly 420 acres. That means they
11 gonna take all the property in front of
12 the railroad track. If you look at
13 their map, they excluding 1500 feet on
14 one side which is over 220 acres they
15 are planning not using right now
16 because they said they were going to
17 use it in a buffer zone. On the other
18 side, they said there gonna be a buffer
19 zone also. They said 1200 feet. 1200
20 feet to what? The Simon Subdivision?
21 It's only 1088 feet of Simon
22 Subdivision. What about the eight
23 residents between Simon Subdivision and
24 Petroplex complex? Those people
25 weren't offered a buyout. They gonna

□

55

1 be closer than the people that are
2 being offered buyouts in the front who
3 are 1500 feet away.

deqvac

4 Those numbers don't add up. They
5 buying this property for something
6 else. Nobody tells you that. You look
7 at the long picture, you pay that kind
8 of money for that piece of property,
9 something else gonna be put there.

10 I'm strongly opposed to this
11 property being put there. They can put
12 it somewhere's else. Not in my
13 backyard. My wife is a cancer
14 survivor. I lived in Vacherie over 70
15 years, and I'd like to continue living
16 over here. Thank you.

17 MR. WARD:

18 Van Zeringue.

19 MR. VAN ZERINGUE:

20 My name is Van Zeringue. I'm a
21 life-long resident of Vacherie. I was
22 born 58 years ago just across the
23 parish line in Wallace, Louisiana. But
24 in 1979, my wife and I built a home on
25 St. James Street in Vacherie. Our home

□

56

1 sits 225 feet of the eastern boundary
2 line of the proposed site of the
3 Petroplex International complex. Is
4 the fact that one couple chose to build
5 here reason enough to oppose the
6 project? Of course it's not. But on

deqvac

7 each side of this track of land, you
8 will find many couples, many parents,
9 many grandparents, many single-parent
10 families, folks, just as my wife and I
11 built here because we wanted to
12 perpetuate the down home feelings and
13 culture that we grew up with in
14 Vacherie.

15 we relish the easy pace of life
16 here, no big city hustle and bustle.
17 We don't have to lock our doors at
18 night. We know and appreciate all our
19 neighbors. Our children have come back
20 to Vacherie to make homes for
21 themselves because they understand why
22 we chose to live here. Hopefully, one
23 day our grandchildren will also
24 appreciate why we chose to live here.
25 Long ago, we realized that Vacherie is

□

57

1 the kind of community where family,
2 both closely extended really meant
3 something.

4 I fully appreciate without the
5 economic development, St. James Parish
6 would not enjoy a strong tax base. Our
7 public school system has suffered from
8 lack of funding and many of the
9 amenities we enjoy will probably cost

deqvac

10 more and more. However, I believe we
11 are inundated our whole parish to an
12 extent we almost have no bedroom
13 communities left. Our children were
14 raised without noise, light, or air-
15 pollution and I oppose this projects
16 because I would love for my
17 grandchildren to be raised in the same
18 environment.

19 Petroplex International threatens
20 this way of life for myself and my wife
21 and my children's future and that of my
22 grandchildren. Thank you.

23 MR. WARD:

24 The next person registered to speak
25 is Mr. Russell Recatto.

□

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1 MR. RUSSELL RECATTO:

2 My name is Russell Recatto. I live at
3 1190 St. James Street in Vacherie,
4 Louisiana. I've lived there for 45
5 years. The proposed Petroplex
6 International site will be in my
7 backyard. This facility will increase
8 the toxic chemicals already in the air
9 and we do not need the stress.

10 The risk that this facility will
11 propose to our public safety are:
12 chemical spills, noise, fires, leaks,

deqvac

13 smell, increase in river traffic,
14 pipeline explosions, and storage of
15 toxic materials. For these reasons
16 stated, I am strongly opposed to the
17 Petroplex International facility in our
18 area.

19 MR. WARD:

20 Next is Pamela Zeringue.

21 MS. PAMELA ZERINGUE:

22 Thank you for this opportunity to
23 speak. I'm Pam Zeringue. I live at
24 1245 St. James Street, Vacherie. This
25 evening I stand along side my community

□

59

1 in opposition to Petroplex
2 International. As a special education
3 teacher and educational diagnostician,
4 and the Director of Special Education
5 in St. James Parish Public School
6 System, I have had the opportunity to
7 deal with the children and families in
8 this parish most in need of help in the
9 educational system and have been
10 responsible for ensuring that the
11 rights of these children, ages birth
12 through 22 years, are afforded them by
13 the public school system.

14 Many children with many different
15 anomalies can cross the doors of our

deqvac

16 schools. In educating these children
17 is a challenge to the school system,
18 economically, educationally,
19 emotionally, and logistically. I have
20 often studied the theories that
21 neighboring parishes have addressed
22 regarding the impact of this industrial
23 corridor between New Orleans and Baton
24 Rouge on children born with birth
25 defects to parents living in this

□

60

1 corridor. That something in the
2 environment may be causing our children
3 to be born with extreme disabilities.

4 In preparing programs for these
5 children for the 2009-2010 school year
6 alone, I am taken aback by the fact the
7 school system will receive eight 4-year
8 olds with significant disabilities in
9 August of 2009. 8 out of an
10 anticipated 275 to enroll parish-wide.
11 These children are not included in
12 those who will be identified as with
13 other milder disabilities once they
14 enter the educational system. These
15 are eight babies who were identified at
16 birth or shortly thereafter as being
17 significantly disabled. This figure
18 makes one wonder. What went wrong

deqvac

19 during that particular birth year that
20 impacted so many St. James Parish
21 children so drastically. Could it be
22 the environment? Could it be the
23 emissions from the industries up and
24 down St. James Parish and the
25 neighboring parishes that are affecting

□

61

1 the children born to parents living
2 here? There is no proof that it is.
3 But it is a powerful risk.

4 As a parent and grandparent, in
5 addition to dealing with children and
6 their challenges every day for 36
7 years, I see first hand the need to
8 question the long-term effects that
9 industrial emissions and circumstances
10 will have on children born to parents
11 living in St. James Parish. Can you
12 chance adding to this threat?

13 Therefore, as a life-long resident
14 of Vacherie and landowner of the
15 property being pursued by Petroplex, I
16 have been personally offended by the
17 way in which this situation has been
18 dealt with since day one. Although the
19 individuals pushing this land sale and
20 the subsequent proposed project will
21 say they have rights in this regard, I

deqvac

22 too have rights as do my family,
23 neighbors, friends, and all children
24 who live in St. James Parish.
25 As news of my opposition was made

□

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1 public, threats of legal ramifications
2 were issued. And I was forced to join
3 the Landowners Limited Liability
4 Corporation. Keeping away from the
5 legal issues involved, this matter
6 quickly transferred into a with us or
7 against us situation. Rather than be
8 provided honest answers to difficult
9 but reasonable questions, we as a
10 community have received nothing more
11 than political spin from this proposed
12 company that has the potential for
13 immense harm.

14 Having researched the project on my
15 own, there is far too many
16 circumstances and adverse health
17 effects upon our residents,
18 particularly our children. With this
19 in mind, I ask that while the Louisiana
20 Department of Environmental Quality
21 reviews this permit application, that
22 they look closely at the harsh
23 realities of what this proposal truly
24 represents to our beloved home and to

deqvac

25 the future of St. James Parish. But in

□

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1 particular, to the children of St.
2 James Parish. Thank you.

3 MR. WARD:

4 Next is Nolan Waguespack, Sr.

5 MR. NOLAN WAGUESPACK, SR.

6 My name is Nolan Waguespack. I
7 live at 1136 St. James Street. I was
8 born here in Vacherie 50 feet from my
9 present residence and got here 13 years
10 ago. My wife and I returned home for
11 country living where it is quiet,
12 peaceful, serene, not crowded, where
13 homes are not on top of each other,
14 good and friendly people. But most of
15 all, we are very happy here. My
16 ancestors lived right here in our area
17 239 years ago.

18 Because of the nature of this
19 plant, we are now faced with a very
20 serious situation with the proposed
21 Petroplex site near our homes, which
22 would be very detrimental to our
23 health. The site would be located on
24 the rear of my property line. As a
25 result, this area would no longer be

□

1 suited for habitation. Furthermore,
2 the site would be located between two
3 communities which is the most populated
4 area in Vacherie.

5 Vacherie is noted for its rich
6 farmlands, especially sugarcane and
7 tourism which attracts people from all
8 over the world. Historically speaking,
9 we have many plantation homes here:
10 Laura, Oak Alley, St. Joe, and
11 Felicity, which is presently being
12 repaired. The other day I took my car
13 and I drove to see how far Laura was
14 from here. Laura is located one and
15 four-tenth miles from the west line of
16 the proposed site. And would be
17 affected in the same manner as our
18 immediate area. So it surely would
19 affect our tourism also.

20 The two detrimental ingredients
21 Petroplex would be used are - I'm
22 going to expand more on the hazardous
23 materials. Crude and gasoline, which
24 would be stored in both floating and
25 fixed roof tanks, which will be vented

□

1 into the atmosphere meaning the

2 deqvac
hazardous fumes will be inhaled by our
3 residents daily. The crude stinks like
4 rotten eggs, hydrogen sulfide, which is
5 very toxic and unbearable for humans to
6 live near as it pollutes the air we
7 breathe which contains cancer-causing
8 agents. Some of the symptoms are:
9 headaches, dizziness, and also attacks
10 the nervous system and possibly cancer.
11 This crude is very corrosive. And as a
12 result after a few years, tank bottoms
13 must be changed. During the corrosion
14 process, crude would seep into the soil
15 causing ground contamination.

16 A few years ago, Amoco was
17 dismantling their Destrehan Refinery
18 was found that the grounds were
19 contaminated. As a result, the soil
20 had to be treated at their expense at a
21 phenomenal cost. The reason why I say
22 Amoco is because I was an employee of
23 Amoco and I did work in the crude oil
24 purchasing department. I'm very aware
25 of some of these crudes.

□

66

1 I would like to add that during the
2 construction of the Hale Boggs Bridge,
3 which is partly located on the property
4 owned by Amoco, it was discovered by

5 degvac
the building contractor that soil was
6 fully saturated with contamination.
7 This was the location of the tank farm
8 because we gonna have a large tank farm
9 over here. This was the location of
10 the tank farm as faulty crude. At that
11 time, Amoco treated all the plant
12 grounds including this location.

13 Apparently during the years, the
14 corrosion process had been incurred on
15 all storage tank bottoms. I'm sure not
16 very many people are aware of this, the
17 nature of this crude, how corrosive it
18 is.

19 Gasoline tanks. As you all know,
20 gasoline is very volatile and also has
21 cancer-causing agents. If any of these
22 tanks were to be hit by lightening,
23 there would be a terrible explosion,
24 which would severely damage all the
25 homes in the area and probably would

□

67

1 cause fatalities. Just recently, there
2 was an explosion at the Marathon
3 pipeline located in St. James about 10
4 miles from here killing one worker and
5 injuring three.

6 Due to the closeness of our area,
7 this facility would be very stressful

8 degvac
to bear about our residents. And of
9 course, we got a lot of retirees here
10 and we can't afford to move. Hazardous
11 and polluted waste from the blending
12 process would be drained in the back of
13 the plant across Highway 3127 into the
14 wetlands and eventually spilled into
15 Lake Des Allemands, killing the
16 vegetation and the fish.

17 Our area does not need toxic dust,
18 noise, and light pollution. We have
19 young families with small children and
20 many retirees. We have many of our
21 citizens and children with health
22 problems, such as heart, asthma, COPD,
23 and other sickness and cancer
24 survivors.

25 The Petroplex facility would alter

□

68

1 the land use subsequently damage and/or
2 destroy the quality of life in vacherie
3 forever impacting future generations,
4 especially our children. I hope
5 that DEQ recognizes the problems that
6 we are faced with. Like Dr. Waguespack
7 said, I'm not opposed to Petroplex
8 coming into St. James Parish, but I am
9 definitely opposed to them coming to
10 this area. This is strictly a

11 deqvac
residential area, and it's not an
12 industrial complex.

13 Because of this, I strongly oppose
14 Petroplex coming here and erecting this
15 facility. Thank you.

16 MR. WARD:

17 Next I have Mae Waguespack. And
18 I'd like to remind everyone to please
19 keep their comments to five minutes.
20 Thank you.

21 MS. MAE WAGUESPACK:

22 Good evening. My name is Mae
23 waguespack. I live at 1136 St. James
24 Street in Vacherie. Our backyard is on
25 the boundary line of the proposed

□

69

1 Petroplex International site. My
2 husband and I were raised in this area
3 and moved away to Gretna, Louisiana
4 when we got married. We raised our
5 family in Gretna and when my husband
6 retired, we started looking for a
7 quiet, peaceful and green community to
8 spend our last years. We found it
9 right here in Vacherie.

10 Had we known that after 39 years of
11 being happy with our decision, a crude
12 oil and gasoline storage tank farm
13 would come to our clean and peaceful

14 deqvac
community, we definitely would not have
15 moved here. I am a breast cancer
16 survivor and in my 9th year of
17 remission. And if we would want to
18 move for health reasons, we would be
19 unable to do so. As a facility such as
20 Petroplex is planning in our beautiful,
21 quiet and peaceful community would
22 greatly decrease our property value and
23 we would be unable to sell our home, as
24 noone will want to settle next door to
25 such a toxic and deadly facility.

□

70

1 I am definitely opposed to the
2 proposed Petroplex International
3 Storage and Blending facility.
4 MR. WARD:
5 Next is Charles Donald Becnel II.
6 MR. CHARLES DONALD BECNEL, III:
7 I'm Don Becnel. I live at 1492 Hwy
8 18 in this house right here. My mom
9 lives over here and the rest of the
10 land I own in the world is right over
11 here, about 80 acres. The pool that's
12 in place partially from the
13 contribution of my dad. This school
14 house was built about 110 years ago.
15 My mom started school there. And
16 crawling out the front window of the

17 deqvac
18 porch, met my dad. Mama went to school
19 in Lafayette and back then it took a
20 long time to get to Lafayette. And
21 when she graduated as a teacher, her
22 first teaching job was in this school.
23 She can tell me who sat in what chair.
24 when we fill in the form to speak,
25 we are only given two options. We can
oppose it or we can be for it. If I

□

71

1 was the deciding vote, it's not gonna
2 happen. It can't happen. Maybe, it's
3 selfishness on my end, but I want to
4 look out of my window whether I live
5 there or move closer to my mama's house
6 and I want to see cane fields. It's
7 okay to paint the tanks white. You
8 could put camouflage on them. They can
9 look like cane field and swamp. I've
10 been around industry all the time.

11 By no means an expert in
12 environmental or pollution or crude oil
13 storage whatsoever. But I really,
14 deeply resent the amount of division
15 that this project has caused. And it's
16 not the fault of the business people.
17 They are able to do whatever is legal.
18 People need to understand that whether
19 or not this project gets going, we

20 degvac
still live next to each other. We
21 still depend on each other. And
22 telling stories about people that isn't
23 true serves no purpose whatsoever when
24 you're trying to build your site,
25 trying to make somebody look like the

□

72

1 enemy. I get questioned why I'm
2 selling the house to Petroplex. Some
3 people live two miles from it. I live
4 in the middle of the dock of Petroplex.
5 I don't get emotional about it. It's a
6 frickin' business deal. That's what
7 it's going to be. It's either going to
8 be allowed or not allowed.

9 My comments tonight and I've got a
10 few things. I've never done this
11 before. The people who have served me
12 in this and I don't want my tires to be
13 slashed. The people that have served
14 me in this have been DEQ. I've talked
15 to a tremendous amount of people about
16 DEQ, and everybody in this room needs
17 to be extremely grateful that we live
18 in Louisiana and we have DEQ. They are
19 above question. They are some of the
20 most stringent people in the country.
21 I made lots of calls and I love the
22 fact that y'all are involved in the

23 deqvac
process. That's a wonderful thing.
24 Other people who have served my
25 purpose don't want tires cut either. I

□

73

1 have received more consistent
2 information out of the people who are
3 involved with Petroplex International
4 than I've received from my elected
5 public officials. That is unacceptable
6 to me. The newspaper will not refuse
7 to print a story. It just has to be
8 given to them. I don't believe in my
9 heart that nobody knows what's going
10 on. If I can find out what's going on,
11 and until recently I'm mostly outside
12 the parish. If I can find out, public
13 officials can find out.

14 So the people who have served me is
15 DEQ, Petroplex. The ones that have
16 failed me - Man, the families selling
17 a piece of property. You know, come up
18 and be real about it. It's a business
19 deal. We had a piece of property,
20 maybe we'd be making the same decision.
21 But don't make like we're not going to
22 found out it happened. It's Public
23 Record when the property is sold.
24 Everybody knows who signs the papers.
25 Be up front. Be real about it. Spend

1 a few thousand dollars and put a story
2 in the paper. Mail a booklet out for
3 me. Don't make me go find out what's
4 going on, not in my parish, but where I
5 live.

6 Elected officials have failed me.
7 And the people in the community, you
8 got to understand people, this is
9 Vacherie. The grapevine exists.
10 Everybody knows what's going on and
11 everybody knows what you're saying
12 about everybody else. And I don't
13 magically control this process. If I
14 did, I'd have projects going up all
15 over the place. It's not reasonable to
16 accuse somebody of something when they
17 are a victim because Becnel is a
18 victim.

19 I really like living in Vacherie.
20 I tell people I can see the graveyard
21 from where I live and that's the next
22 move I'm going to make. We tell people
23 that we know from outside that Vacherie
24 is the center of the known civilized
25 world. I really believe it is. A

deqvac

1 couple of things everybody in this room
2 needs to understand. And how long do
3 you think it will be after they get
4 turned down. Fifteen minutes later
5 somebody else is coming along with a
6 project. So people in this room really
7 have some kind of a reason to be
8 against the project, let's come up with
9 something else being done with the
10 property.

11 Friends of mine from New Orleans
12 tried to approach the family three,
13 four, five, six years ago. They wanted
14 to build an estate residential
15 community. They wanted to do 5, 10,
16 15, 20 acre lots, where people could
17 have horses and do what they wanted.
18 It would have been nice. It is nowhere
19 near the money we're getting for it
20 now. However, since the storm in New
21 Orleans, maybe you can gather the clay
22 that's on the property, finance, get
23 yourself a little more money and then
24 sell it and then maybe come close to
25 same thing you have now (inaudible)

□

76

1 from the community.

2 The other thing that's really
3 amazing to me is that state parks,

deqvac

4 Louisiana State Parks, really is
5 interested in a piece of property.
6 Louisiana State Parks approached the
7 owners of the property because my
8 second son works for State Parks and
9 they wanted to have the opportunity to
10 look at it because State Parks owns
11 property on Lake Des Allemands that's
12 was donated to Charity Hospital. And
13 they own land along the canal that goes
14 to Lake Des Allemands. They would like
15 800 to 3,000 acres somewhere in St.
16 James Parish. When State Parks come to
17 St. James Parish, they get told on the
18 Eastbank. I think it should be done on
19 the westbank. I think it would be a
20 really nice facility.
21 I really appreciate the time to speak
22 tonight. If I offended anybody, I
23 really, really didn't mean to offend
24 anybody, but that's life. You just
25 have to suck it up and live with it

□

77

1 because I've been doing it for two
2 years. Thank y'all very much. And I'm
3 going check my tires.

4 MR. WARD:

5 Loraine Cazenave.

6 MS. LORAIN CAZENAVE:
Page 69

deqvac

7 My name is Loraine Cazenave. I
8 live at 1119 St. James Street in
9 Vacherie, less than 1/4 mile from the
10 proposed site. This address has been
11 our home for more than 40 years. Even
12 if we had a buyout, there is no
13 indication that this might be in our
14 favor. Our home is the only home that
15 our children and grandchildren
16 remember. I have multiple allergies
17 and suffer with chronic bronchial
18 asthma, which at times have been
19 serious even life-threatening. And
20 exercise in the form of walking has
21 been recommended for me to maintain
22 mobile capacity and to remain healthy.
23 For three of the four seasons of the
24 year, I walk up and down my street,
25 approximately an hour a day. I feel

□

78

1 that this practice will be threatened
2 by having the industrial complex in
3 such close proximity to my
4 neighborhood.

5 I understand the information put
6 out by Petroplex with regard to
7 emissions. But I also understand that
8 optimum conditions do not always prevail
9 in industrial facilities. Therefore, I

deqvac

10 feel compelled to voice my opposition
11 to the proposed Petroplex Industrial
12 Storage and Blending facility. Thank
13 you.

14 MR. WARD:

15 R. J. Cazenave.

16 MR. R. J. CAZENAVE:

17 My name is R. J. Cazenave. My
18 address is 1119 St. James Street,
19 Vacherie, Louisiana. I live about 60
20 yards from the eastern boundary of the
21 proposed Petroplex site. I have lived
22 my entire life within one mile of the
23 proposed site. I have been living at
24 my present address for the past 40
25 years. Two generations of my family

□

79

1 have lived within one mile of the
2 proposed site for the past 90-95 years.
3 We have a quiet, clean, serene
4 community here in Vacherie along the
5 Mississippi River.

6 Looking out of my window on any
7 given day, overlooking the proposed
8 site, one can only see nature at its
9 best. Lots of greenery. This is truly
10 a beautiful piece of real estate. If
11 this kind of industry is allowed to
12 locate here, our small community will

deqvac

13 be divided by a maze of pipes and all
14 storage tanks. Our quality of life as
15 we know it now will surely change
16 forever.

17 Surely, there must be other sites
18 that are far less populated to build a
19 complex, such as the one proposed for
20 this location. We know that tons of
21 toxic materials, chemicals will be
22 released into the atmosphere each year
23 into our neighborhoods, North, South,
24 East and West of this site.

25 I also share all the concerns of

□

80

1 all the people who are opposed to this
2 facility being built on this site. I
3 also have questions about the
4 wastewater treatment facility that will
5 be part of this complex. If the
6 proposed permit is granted, where will
7 the air flow from this wastewater
8 facility end up? Will it be in the
9 river or canals that lead to Lake
10 Maurepas? Also, can this wastewater
11 facility become an entity unto itself?
12 By that I mean: Are there any plans in
13 the future that have wastewater from
14 other industries, including refineries
15 along the river, ship here to be

deqvac

16 processed by this wastewater facility?
17 will there be any wastewater treated or
18 untreated pumped or injected down deep
19 disposal wells on this proposed site?
20 what about fire and process leaks when
21 they occur? And sooner or later, they
22 will. Will we have to evacuate our
23 homes?

24 As I have stated before, our
25 quality of life will surely change if

□

81

1 Petroplex is allowed to build a
2 facility of this kind on this proposed
3 site. For the reasons stated, I am
4 strongly opposed to the proposed
5 Petroplex International storage and
6 blending facility. Thank you.

7 MR. WARD:

8 Brenda Prestenback.

9 MS. BRENDA PRESTENBACK:

10 Good afternoon. My name is Brenda
11 Prestenback. I reside at 1224 St.
12 James Street. I've resided there for
13 42 years. I'm a member of Community
14 Strength and I strongly oppose the
15 construction of the Petroplex facility
16 at the proposed site. Thank you.

17 MR. WARD:

18 Kenneth Prestenback.

deqvac

19 MR. KENNETH PRESTENBACK:

20 My name is Kenneth Prestenback. I
21 live at 1224 St. James Street,
22 Vacherie. I am greatly opposed of this
23 facility coming to our area for the
24 simple reason, toxics. I'm a retired
25 oilfield worker. I know what it is.

□

82

1 Mr. Norman said the word "hydrogen
2 sulfide." I don't know how many people
3 in here know what hydrogen sulfide is
4 but a leaking packing plan on a pump up
5 the river the tank will emit hydrogen
6 sulfide. And wind coming from the
7 South coming across the river while
8 they're unloading - guess what?
9 They're going across the river. I can
10 give you an example: Zapp's Potato
11 Chips. Every time they put potatoes in
12 the oil, I smell it. That's from the
13 north to the south. Guess what? It's
14 going across. And everything from the
15 north, when the wind is blowing from
16 the tanks, it's going to South
17 Vacherie. So we don't have that many
18 people who gonna cross the river over
19 here or from South Vacherie. So I'm
20 trying to tell you all what could be a
21 major problem in our area.

deqvac

22 I'm truly opposed to Petroplex.

23 MR. WARD:

24 Next is Rene Zeringue, Jr.

25 MR. RENE ZERINGUE, JR.:

□

83

1 Good evening. My name is Rene
2 Zeringue. I live at 1275 St. James
3 Street. I just want to show you
4 something. I live right here. I told
5 the Petroplex people from the start.
6 Every time I get my mail or get my
7 newspaper or look out the front of my
8 house, I would be seeing this thing. I
9 told them I didn't want to see it.
10 They said they were going to put two
11 rows of trees right here. It will take
12 a long time for these trees to stop me
13 from seeing this plant.

14 Originally, they wanted to put it
15 700 feet from right here. We
16 complained. Now, they moved it all the
17 way here. There's no buffer zone at
18 all. Like Mr. Alan said, people own
19 this property right here. There's no
20 buffer zone. And I think with the
21 noise from the railcars, the trucks,
22 and the barges on the river, I think
23 what's going to end up happening is
24 you're going to have more people move

deqvac

25 away from vacherie than 50 jobs they

□

84

1 gonna create.

2 I worked in a chemical plant for 35
3 years and no matter how safe or how
4 good they build it, things happen,
5 equipment fails, and people make
6 mistakes. You always have leaks,
7 things happen. Thank you, and I do
8 oppose it.

9 MR. WARD:

10 Jane Ockmand.

11 MS. JANE OCKMAND:

12 Good evening. My name is Jane
13 Ockmand. My address is 1663 Hwy 18 in
14 vacherie. I am opposed to the proposed
15 Petroplex International Storage and
16 Blending facility. I live
17 approximately 220 yards from this
18 proposed site. The storage of toxic
19 materials will be too close to where I
20 live. I purchased my home about nine
21 years ago and made that decision based
22 on the fact that this is a residential
23 community. For these reasons, I am
24 strongly opposed to the facility.

25 MR. WARD:

□

1 Clifford Joshuad.

2 MR. CLIFFORD JOSHUAD:

3 Good evening. My name is Clifford
4 Joshuad. I live at 2111 LA Hwy 18.
5 That's on River Road. First of all, I
6 wanted to thank the individuals who
7 gave me an opportunity to come over to
8 listen to people's concerns. I think I
9 picked up more information this
10 afternoon than I heard one gentleman
11 said, he's been communicated to for the
12 past two years and I live right here.
13 Not that I expect to know everything or
14 hear anything, but I would think I
15 would hear a lot more than today
16 previously. Again, thanks a lot for
17 this information.

18 Again, I've got empathy for the
19 people who lives along St. James
20 Street. I can imagine how some of you
21 might be terrified of what's going to
22 take place. But I'm a product of first
23 of all, a good education and then plant
24 life. That's how I made my living. I
25 look around this room. I guarantee you

□

1 the majority of you here worked in a

2 deqvac
plant. And I guess the thing I can say
3 is if it's the right thing to do, and
4 we build it right, it's going to be
5 right for this community. So I support
6 this project.

7 MR. WARD:

8 Michael Calabro.

9 MR. MICHAEL CALABRO:

10 Hello. My name is Michael Calabro,
11 resident of Vacherie. I live at 1182
12 St. James Street. It's not about
13 taxes. It's not about jobs. It's
14 about people. That's what it's about.
15 You can talk about that all day long
16 until you're blue in the face. That's
17 what it all comes down to is people. I
18 truly wish that I can stand before you
19 this evening and thank a specific
20 organization or individual for
21 prompting this public hearing, but I
22 cannot. I can only offer my gratitude
23 and sincere appreciation to this
24 wonderful community that stands before
25 you tonight in their own defense in

□

87

1 opposition to Petroplex International.

2 Through a collection of concerned
3 citizens who strongly contest Petroplex
4 International and their intention to

5 deqvac
develop a petroleum and bio-fuels
6 products complex in our residential
7 community in Vacherie. This grass
8 roots movement known as Community
9 Strength began in April, 2008. Since
10 that time and in direct correlation,
11 the Petroplex International's lack of
12 communicable engagement and awareness,
13 it has been Community Strength's
14 objective to provide the most accurate
15 and up to date information with regard
16 to this proposal and the hazardous
17 impact it will have on our beloved
18 residents, their surroundings, and
19 cherished way of life.

20 Although we may witness various
21 words of support for this project,
22 please take heed to the reasons behind
23 such support. In it's undeniable
24 relationship of personal, financial
25 gain. Nothing more.

□

88

1 As opposition arose early on,
2 knowing that this project could not
3 stand on the merits of their underlying
4 proposal, Petroplex International
5 quickly began to swarm around our
6 Vacherie community members. These
7 personal visits varying from individual

8 degvac
to small groups came under the guides
9 of a community advisory panel or cap.
10 I was not invited to be on that cap.
11 These visits entailed free t-shirts,
12 lunches, offers of home buyouts,
13 promise of patronage and endless other
14 interesting oppositions at an attempt
15 to garnish superficial backing. I
16 oppose that. They occurred at all
17 hours of the day. And have taken place
18 at various locations throughout our
19 community.
20 Even though these interactions were
21 denoted by Petroplex, specifically on
22 Page 6 of the Environmental Assessment
23 Statement, as meetings conduct into a
24 form and educate the local community,
25 no such educational component ever took

□

89

1 place. That man just told you. He
2 learned more tonight than he has in the
3 ten months since April of 2008. More
4 tonight.
5 It also must be distinguished that
6 the based of the information Petroplex
7 has provided, nowhere were they able to
8 indicate that those attending these
9 gatherings came away in support of the
10 proposed facilities. We only see some

11 degvac
pretty shirts. That's what we see from
12 those meetings. To say that this
13 proposal has garnered more than 2
14 percent support from our community,
15 would be a drastic overstatement.

16 I know this not because of the
17 stand I take in opposition, but through
18 the tireless interaction that I had
19 with every facet of our community.
20 This interaction can be counted not
21 only by viewing the individuals here
22 before you this evening, but also by
23 granting consideration of the
24 substantial amount of people that are
25 unable to attend or seemingly afraid to

□

90

1 speak out. We know who you are and we
2 understand you support us in opposing
3 this.

4 Some of us, through no real fault
5 of their own, think that if they admit
6 to being anti-Petroplex that they will
7 be inheriting the stance for anti-
8 industry. Others, with family members
9 hoping to turn a profit, remain fearful
10 of ancestral seclusion. Then we have
11 the elderly. Those in poor health and
12 the indigent of our community. These
13 folks are the most often forgotten and

14 deqvac
most deserving of a proper voice of
15 this proceeding. And where are they?
16 They're left without transportation or
17 the proper technology to effectively
18 contribute. That makes no sense.
19 We're not giving a major component of
20 our community the opportunity to be
21 heard.
22 This is why I dare to say that this
23 process has not reached the grounds of
24 ultimate fairness. Not only are we
25 left to fend for ourselves through a

□

91

1 sea of endless paperwork and
2 bureaucratic propaganda, but we are
3 expected to speak before a crowd in a
4 time frame no longer than a few
5 minutes. There are infomercials that
6 last hours and we get three minutes at
7 best. Can this action be referred to
8 as an even hand approach, balancing the
9 need for economic development and the
10 sentiments of this community
11 resistance? Absolutely not. This
12 provides a way to tell our citizens
13 that they had their day in the sun.
14 Now remove yourselves from our path and
15 let's do what we have come here to do.
16 Pelage your lands, pollute your air,

17 degvac
and infect your water so we may turn a
18 profit. But I say no.

19 Although our elected officials
20 failed to properly represent us,
21 Petroplex International and others like
22 them must be held accountable. Trying
23 to sneak in as a minor source
24 designation, a technique we are now
25 witnessing all too often, must be outed

□

92

1 for the deceptive practice that it has
2 unfortunately become. Petroplex would
3 have loved for this public scrutiny to
4 have gone away quietly. But for the
5 forceful persistence of our community,
6 it must now be recognized if this
7 project does not belong in the center
8 of our homeland and place them forever
9 in harms way. Once more, I ask you to
10 identify the significance of this
11 proposal as a money-making venture.
12 Nothing more.

13 To say that this development has
14 been undertaken for the good of the
15 community, is a bold-faced fabrication
16 in averting the practical facts
17 involved. Greenfield site. Do we all
18 know what that means? As designated by
19 DEQ, this means that the area has not

20 degvac
been previously used for industrial
21 development. In this particular case,
22 an agricultural field with no prior
23 signs of contamination would be
24 devastated by Petroplex International.
25 Petroplex will increase our current and

□

93

1 possible and probable human carcinogens
2 by 357 percent. DEQ can't protect us
3 from that. 357 percent. An increase
4 in our Benzene intake, a cancer causing
5 agent and a punch line used by
6 Petroplex International will be
7 increased by 14 percent.

8 St. James ranks as the 11th highest
9 parish out of 64. A fact that our
10 Parish President, who is nowhere to be
11 found, should know all too well. But
12 what are we doing about it? 11 out of
13 64. That's not close to the bottom.
14 That's closer to the top. For chronic
15 human health risks in the State of
16 Louisiana based on an EPA database.
17 This database measures emissions from
18 industrial facilities, toxicity of
19 chemicals released by the specific
20 facilities, and the number of people
21 impacted by those chemicals. All of us
22 here tonight. To fence-line

23 degvac
communities will be created in the wake
24 of this mass expedition, perpetually
25 placing us all in the path of the storm

□

94

1 and creating never-ending instability.
2 Regarding our general safety.
3 Having tanks of this nature so close to
4 residential communities is reckless and
5 beyond explanation. Lightening has
6 been known to ignite oil/fuel tanks in
7 a very recent past. Our area is not
8 equipped to handle such a man-made
9 disaster nor should it be expected to.
10 You cannot offensively fight a fire or
11 an explosion that's contributed to by a
12 facility such as this. Evacuation
13 groups continue to be an issue for our
14 area in the event of an emergency
15 situation, such as a hurricane or a
16 chemical spill. This proposal will
17 only enhance our level of insecurity.
18 Large and small scaled tanks are placed
19 on pump sand and are known to sink over
20 time, as Mr. Norman Waguespack eluded
21 to. When these tanks sink, the outside
22 protection unit will crack and cause
23 frequent leakage into the soil and the
24 atmosphere. Rather than dealing with
25 this matter after the fact, we must

1 prevent it from every occurring.

2 I will not speak for our Vacherie
3 Fire Department not it's Fire Chief,
4 but we need to understand that they are
5 not able to offensively fight any such
6 fire or explosion. And they shouldn't
7 be expected to. Along with lost
8 community park and the planned District
9 6 recreational building, there are six
10 schools, five public and one private
11 and two daycare centers within a two-
12 mile radius of this proposed facility.

13 I'm not a wealthy man, but if you
14 hire people to do homework, have them
15 do the homework. Look at this. Five
16 public schools, one private, two
17 daycare centers within a two-mile
18 radius. Never even pointed out to in
19 the EAS statement or any other
20 documentation provided to our community
21 to Petroplex International. Never once
22 has it been provided.

23 MR. WARD:

24 Excuse me. It's been 10 minutes.

25 MR. MICHAEL CALABRO:

deqvac

1 Okay. I'm going to come back and
2 see y'all in a little bit. Thank you
3 for the time.

4 MR. WARD:

5 You're welcome to come back at the
6 end. We need to take a five minute
7 recess.

8 (OFF THE RECORD.)

9 (RECESS TAKEN.)

10 (BACK ON THE RECORD.)

11 MR. WARD:

12 Eva Knight.

13 MS. EVA KNIGHT:

14 Hello. I'm Eva Knight. I live at
15 1160 Waguespack Street in Vacherie. I
16 live within about a mile from this
17 proposed Petroplex site. Please
18 consider the people who live here.
19 Five plus generations have made this
20 area home. They have worked very hard
21 to give us the land we have today.
22 People are moving back to Vacherie to
23 start families because it is safe and
24 because we live in the country. Now,
25 what about the elderly? Is this tank

□

97

1 farm fair for them? Think for a
2 moment. Suppose that you were told
3 that a tank farm was to be built near

deqvac

4 your backyard. How would you feel?
5 what about your families health? what
6 about your children and your
7 grandchildren?

8 For these reasons, I'm strongly
9 opposed to the Petroplex facility.

10 MR. WARD:

11 I have another public official,
12 Lawless Turner.

13 MR. LAWLESS TURNER:

14 Good evening. My name is Lawless
15 Turner. I am representing the
16 Department of Economic Development at
17 Baton Rouge. The address is 1052 Third
18 Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

19 For the Record, Louisiana Economic
20 Development has been working with
21 Petroplex and is in support of this
22 project here in Vacherie, Louisiana,
23 due to the high emission standards of
24 Petroplex, the strong capabilities of
25 DEQ, the jobs, and the investment.

□

98

1 Louisiana Economic Development is in
2 support of Petroplex.

3 MR. WARD:

4 Next is Matthew Zeringue.

5 MR. MATTHEW ZERINGUE:

6 My name is Matthew Zeringue. I'm
Page 88

deqvac

7 32 years old and I've lived in Vacherie
8 all of my life. At present I live at
9 1156 St. James Street in the home my
10 grandfather and grandmother built some
11 years ago to raise their family in this
12 wonderful community. This home is
13 actually adjacent to the property. I
14 can literally step onto their property
15 or the Homeplace Plantation property
16 versus my own which would be
17 approximately here. I guess it's
18 fitting that I follow Mr. Lawless
19 Turner. Economic impact is what I want
20 to touch on briefly. We've talked
21 about the hazards. Mr. Calabro has
22 talked about the community. I will of
23 course talk about the community
24 afterwards. But let's focus on
25 economics here.

□

99

1 Both our local economical
2 development board, the State Economic
3 Development, has come out in support of
4 this project, which I understand it's
5 their job to create jobs. Economic
6 impact on jobs. Depending on which
7 piece of Petroplex International you
8 prefer, websites, handouts, press
9 releases, and presentations, each

deqvac

10 portrayal provides a different
11 perspective for discussing employment
12 opportunities at the proposed facility.
13 The most recent magic number providing
14 6800 jobs and an annual salary of
15 roughly \$60,000.00. Over the course of
16 nine months, these employment numbers
17 have ranged from the low of 15 to 30,
18 which is the initial meeting on April
19 28, 2008 then ranged 40 to 60 and 100
20 at an annual salary of \$70,000.00 plus
21 benefits. This is coming straight from
22 the June 26, 2008 Petroplex press
23 release to The Advocate.

24 Now, assume tank farm operations,
25 while researching other facilities in

□

100

1 St. James Parish which our grass roots
2 organization Community Strength has
3 done because we were not provided any
4 of this information. So what we report
5 here or what we present here tonight is
6 through things we've done through our
7 hard work and diligence. So our
8 researching of the facilities in St.
9 James Parish, it appears the main
10 requirements for a tank farm of this
11 nature is approximately one person for
12 every 250,000 barrels of product.

deqvac

13 These facilities will employ
14 approximately 40 people to store and
15 process 10 million barrels.

16 This begs the question. How will
17 Petroplex remain a viable and
18 competitive storage facility with such
19 substantial overhead? why would such a
20 technologically advanced system not be
21 as efficient as what is already in
22 operation today? why would Petroplex
23 require an additional 2,800 workers?
24 Are these more empty promises?

25 Economic impact commentary pulled

□

101

1 directly from the fine print of the
2 Petroplex economic impact statement,
3 pages 4 through 9. Petroplex since the
4 business organization that will develop
5 and operate a tank farm is a Limited
6 Liability Corporation, revenues will
7 not be subject to Louisiana Corporate
8 taxes; therefore, no estimates are made
9 of Louisiana income taxes and can be
10 potentially derived from the tank
11 farm's revenues.

12 The local tax impact. That's what
13 our local tax officials were speaking
14 of earlier. Petroplex: "The impact of
15 the Petroplex terminal on local

deqvac

16 government tax revenues consists of
17 sales tax on taxable spending by
18 facility employees. All the numbers
19 are put into a four-parish region so to
20 elude to a larger than realistic view
21 that also does not include any tax
22 exemptions."

23 Local property tax. Petroplex:
24 "The actual property taxes to be paid
25 may vary depending on assessed values

□

102

1 and applicable tax exemptions. It is
2 also to be assumed that the Petroplex
3 blending operation would qualify as a
4 manufacturing facility under state law
5 and thereby provide for the exemption
6 of property tax on all tanks and
7 buildings." That doesn't sound too
8 good for our tax base.

9 Now, we've heard about the positive
10 numbers, the billions of dollars, the
11 number of jobs is going to create for
12 us. But let's talk for a minute about
13 the jobs that this land is currently
14 responsible for. At present, Homeplace
15 Plantation is approximately 1,000 acres
16 of sugarcane. That represents roughly
17 \$3.2 million, just that 1,000 acres.
18 That's approximately 26 jobs.

deqvac

19 For factory workers, St. James Coop
20 right down the road here, approximately
21 10 miles from us. Those thousand acres
22 will affect 6.26 jobs there; raw sugar
23 factory workers, 5; refinery workers,
24 our neighbors across the street, 28.89
25 jobs, is what this thousand acres

□

103

1 means. Homeplace is responsible for
2 support industry workers, 65 jobs.
3 That is 131.64 jobs that this 1,000
4 acres of sugarcane supports.

5 Now, this data has been collected
6 through research done by Community
7 Strength, but also with consulting the
8 American sugarcane need, Louisiana
9 State University's Department of
10 Agriculture and Louisiana Cooperative
11 Extension Service. These studies were
12 not paid for by a firm, but rather
13 simple citizens concerned about their
14 community and the validity of the
15 Petroplex International proposal.

16 This table will illustrate a point
17 that is not mentioned nor discussed
18 when Petroplex International boasts of
19 economic gains it will bring to
20 Vacherie, the River Parish region, and
21 the State of Louisiana. Direct jobs.

deqvac

22 when comparing economic impact with a
23 1,000 acres of sugarcane lost to the
24 Petroplex International proposal you
25 will find that direct jobs associated

□

104

1 with this site as I mentioned at
2 Homeplace, 131.64 jobs. Petroplex
3 International, 68. That's a loss of
4 63.64 jobs. Jobs associated in the
5 River region, Homeplace sugarcane,
6 1,000 acres, that is 1,132 jobs.
7 Petroplex International, 585. That's a
8 loss of 547 jobs. Jobs associates in
9 the State of Louisiana, 1,764 jobs for
10 these thousand acres. Petroplex, the
11 number was 912, tonight they mentioned
12 1,000. So if you do the math with 912,
13 that is a loss of 852 jobs. Bringing
14 us to a total of 1,462.64 jobs lost if
15 this proposal goes through.

16 Now, how did I arrive at these
17 numbers? Using the same formula to
18 estimate job creation/impact as
19 Petroplex International, I applied this
20 ratio to the thousand acres of
21 sugarcane currently on the proposed
22 site. As you can see, Petroplex will
23 in fact have a negative economic impact
24 to the Vacherie community, the River

1 proposal. Thank you.

2 MR. WARD:

3 Like I said, you're welcome to come
4 back after everyone speaks. I need to
5 ask everybody to try and keep their
6 comments to five minutes. I still have
7 at least 32 people waiting to speak.
8 So we'll be here a while. The next
9 speaker is Michael Delaune.

10 MR. MICHAEL DELAUNE:

11 My name is Michael Delaune. My
12 address is 1623 Hwy 18 in Vacherie. I
13 live approximately 125 feet from this
14 proposed site. I'm going to express my
15 opposition to the proposed Petroplex
16 International Storage and Blending
17 facility. This industrial site located
18 directly adjacent to two residential
19 communities in Vacherie are detrimental
20 to the existence of our area as we know
21 it. Our St. James Parish community
22 should not be forced to accept any
23 additional toxic air pollution which
24 will be emitted from this facility.

25 This project runs the risk of

□

1 suggesting the residents of Vacherie to

2 deqvac
severe hazardous situations and
3 unspeakable possibilities. The storage
4 of chemicals in a residential area will
5 subject all residents of Vacherie to
6 increasing health risks and impact. As
7 of equal importance, there are a number
8 of schools and daycare facilities
9 located within a two mile radius of
10 this proposed site. There has not been
11 any mention of the effect this project
12 will have on the children of our
13 community by Petroplex. Those who feel
14 this projects environmental impact will
15 be limited are sadly mistaken. If
16 Petroplex International is successful
17 in creating this toxic industrial park,
18 it will be the beginning of the end of
19 Vacherie as we know it.

20 Residents who live their entire
21 lives supporting St. James Parish
22 community will be forced from their
23 homes seeking a better quality of life
24 without the toxic storage an blending
25 facility being built in their backyard.

□

108

1 Is this the way senior citizens of St.
2 James Parish should be rewarded after
3 voting their entire lives for
4 preservation of Vacherie's historical

5 deqvac
and agricultural value.

6 For these reasons stated, I am
7 strongly opposed to the Petroplex
8 International facility and urge
9 Louisiana Department of Environmental
10 Quality to protect the citizens of
11 Vacherie from this harmful and unneeded
12 project.

13 MR. WARD:

14 Eva White.

15 MS. EVA WHITE:

16 My name is Eva White. I'm located
17 at 228 Ballpark Drive. That's
18 Vacherie, representing myself and the
19 small portion of my community sometimes
20 called the underprivileged. First of
21 all, we stand totally appalled by your
22 decision-making process. As the
23 gentlemen before me said, you're making
24 it behind closed doors for economic
25 gain. Then presented to us in open

□

109

1 forum and get our opinion.

2 Tonight we stand knowing that from
3 the opinions that we're bringing to you
4 because you possibly already made your
5 decision. First you tell me something
6 about economic gain. What about my
7 community? With the plants that

8 practically exist here, you bring in
9 people from other neighboring states.
10 You give them the better jobs in your
11 plants, especially your white hat jobs.
12 My community, we almost about to say
13 it's becoming discriminatory. If my
14 people have a felony on their records,
15 once you get your records checked, then
16 my people are escorted out of your
17 plant. You're driving my people to the
18 barges. Now, you're telling me these
19 tanks are going to store chemicals that
20 is going to take jobs from the
21 companies. This is where my people go
22 to work to make a living on the barges.
23 what is that going to do to the
24 existing barge companies?
25 what do you have in store for my

110

1
2 community? Let me see what part of
3 this economic gain is going to trickle
4 down to my community.
5 I stand here before you wearing
6 pink because I am a breast cancer
7 survivor. As far as health issues, it
8 presents that to us. I feel that
9 there's a whole lot of areas that could
10 develop our community in besides going

11 deqvac
12 to buy your chemical warfare. We start
13 to deal with bio-chemicals, that's
14 exactly what we're dealing with people
15 "warfare." Present us with the proper
16 facts. I don't care how pretty the
17 grass or how pretty the picture is that
18 you present to us and it's just a
19 dangerous situation that we have before
20 us.

21 Therefore, I stand before you
22 tonight, totally against the coming of
23 this Petroplex or whatever you want to
24 call it.

25 MR. WARD:

 Thank you. Donna Glass.

□

111

1 MS. DONNA GLASS:

2 Hello. My name is Donna Glass. I
3 live at 1154 Simon Street in Vacherie,
4 Louisiana. I am strongly opposed to
5 the Petroplex International Storage and
6 Blending facility. The risks
7 associated with such a facility is much
8 too high for the public and the
9 environment. My life and that of my
10 neighbors and my family and friends
11 must not be for sale. Residential
12 areas will be on both sides of the
13 plant should it pass. This is a great

14 deqvac
concern to me because I value our
15 health, not only to mention that this
16 will cause added stress, noise, lights,
17 river and road traffic, plus
18 contaminate our waterways.

19 Petroplex has not been honest with
20 the community nor met the deadlines
21 required by DEQ. If Petroplex had been
22 honest from day one, and if DEQ were to
23 hold them to the correct filing
24 requirements and reviewed them like
25 other companies, the proposal would

□

112

1 have died and we would not be here
2 trying to protect our way of life and
3 community. DEQ and all the government
4 agencies must seriously review this
5 location of the proposed facility and
6 stop it. If it passes, it will impact
7 every homeowner and resident of
8 vacherie in St. James Parish in the
9 most negative way possible.

10 Petroplex has talked about the jobs
11 that they will provide. But also at
12 the same January meeting, they stated
13 that they have already started training
14 their own operators at sites in other
15 states. Our local people will not get
16 the high-paying permanent jobs, just

17 deqvac
the temporary construction jobs. As
18 stated in the January meeting also, the
19 worse-case scenario zone is a minimum
20 of 5,800 feet. My home is less than
21 450 feet from the site. And my
22 neighbors are too. If you allow this
23 to pass, then our community is dead and
24 the way of life is dead as Vacherie
25 knows it today.

□

113

1 I am not a life-long resident of
2 vacherie. But the country setting, the
3 quiet community, the hometown
4 atmosphere, nested between New Orleans
5 and Baton Rouge was the ideal place for
6 me to call home for this small town
7 girl. They must not take this way of
8 life from us. We have all worked and
9 devoted our lives to our family, our
10 home, small town values, and this
11 country community.

12 Petroplex bought a lot of land and
13 have only shown plans to use a very
14 small portion. Honesty is not their
15 best quality. What do you think
16 they're going to do with the land in
17 the future if they are not showing us
18 they are not going to use at this time?
19 I fear for what they seem to be

20 deqvac
bringing. I do not believe they will
21 keep our quality of life the way it
22 should be. I do believe in industry,
23 but not at this proposed site. This
24 will change Vacherie for the worse.
25 And once change comes, we will not be

□

114

1 able to bring it back. I would like to
2 thank Community Strength and it's
3 founders for all the information and
4 hard work that they have done to bring
5 this before the public. I think y'all
6 have done a fantastic job and I hope
7 that what y'all have said has fallen on
8 the ears of the people that it needs
9 to, especially DEQ.

10 So as I stated, I am very strongly
11 opposed to this. I would hope that
12 Vacherie will stay the way it is.
13 Vacherie is growing. Like I said, I've
14 only lived here for three years, but
15 this is the place that I chose for its
16 quietness, its community living to live
17 here. There are other people that I
18 know who live here and they too chose
19 the quietness and the community living.
20 So I hope it stays that way. Thank
21 you.

22 MR. WARD:

23 deqvac
Next is Marjorie Delaune.

24 MS. MARJORIE DELAUNE:

25 Good evening. My name is Marjorie

□

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1 Delaune. My address is 1623 Hwy 18,
2 here in Vacherie. My home is located
3 about 125 feet from Petroplex
4 International's proposed site. I am
5 strongly opposed to this project due to
6 the location being directly positioned
7 inside that residential community. I
8 have a two-year old daughter and
9 another child on the way whose health
10 should not be a risk for this hazardous
11 proposition. My family along with
12 other families of St. James Parish
13 should be protected from this type of
14 facility being directly positioned in
15 our backyards.

16 It is for these reasons stated that
17 I am strongly opposed to Petroplex
18 International's facility and urge DEQ
19 to make the correct decision preventing
20 this industrial site from being
21 constructed in our residential
22 neighborhood of Vacherie. Thank you.

23 MR. WARD:

24 Claire Tassin.

25 MS. CLAIRE TASSIN:

1 My name is Clair Tassin, 1155 Hwy
2 18 in Vacherie. My family has been
3 here for generations. I grew up here.
4 I left for 35 years. I wanted to come
5 back home. Home is community that we
6 all know. It's green. It's warm.
7 It's wonderful retirement. Senior
8 citizens deserve a place like Vacherie.
9 I oppose. Thank you.

10 MR. WARD:

11 Next is Connie Martin.

12 (NO RESPONSE.)

13 Ryan Melancon.

14 (NO RESPONSE.)

15 Renita Zeringue.

16 (NO RESPONSE.)

17 Troy Louis Washington.

18 (NO RESPONSE.)

19 Louis Landry.

20 MR. LOUIS LANDRY:

21 I'm Louis Landry. I'm a retired
22 detective with the St. James Sheriff's
23 office. I also operated 150 tank farms
24 along with the Airforce in Bangkok,
25 Thailand. That tank farm was built in

deqvac

1 the middle of the city. It contained
2 gasoline and other by-products of crude
3 oil. I'm here tonight on this Thursday
4 and I wish to express my thoughts about
5 the upcoming Petroplex terminal soon to
6 be built here in St. James Parish.
7 I've heard many concerns about the
8 danger of such a site. It has been my
9 privilege to help with work around the
10 facilities as described here tonight.

11 As you can see, I'm still alive. I
12 don't have no defects as a result or
13 illness to being exposed by crude oil
14 products, such as Benzine, light oil,
15 diesel, gasoline, etc. I also heard
16 that there will be other chemicals that
17 will be stored at the site. I work in
18 an area such as that now. We have some
19 chemicals there that can take you out
20 just with one drop of it falling on
21 you. We have chemicals if inhaled,
22 there's no known remedy to bring you
23 back from such a stuff.

24 I've been working for this company
25 for a while. That company has been

□

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1 there over 25 years with no fatalities
2 of any type. It's been built over 25
3 years plus. Surely, it cannot be any

deqvac

4 more dangerous than the horrific stuff
5 that travels throughout our parish on
6 railcars and 18-wheelers.

7 The good part about this facility
8 is that it provides jobs. When that
9 happens, the community strengthens.
10 People spend money. They buy cars and
11 parts to fix these cars. They also buy
12 food from the area and furniture. They
13 put the money in the banks. We also
14 buy medication at drug stores.

15 So I support Petroplex
16 International. In these days and
17 times, with the economy such as it is,
18 this cannot happen at a better time. I
19 want to thank you for listening.

20 MR. WARD:

21 Michael Hickerson.

22 (NO RESPONSE.)

23 Herbert Mitchell.

24 (NO RESPONSE.)

25 Victor Smith.

□

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1 (NO RESPONSE.)

2 Donald Brown.

3 (NO RESPONSE.)

4 James Florent, Sr.

5 MR. JAMES FLORENT, SR.:

6 My name is James Florent, Sr. I
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deqvac

7 reside at 1225 Luther King Avenue in
8 vacherie. I have not worked in any
9 type of industry. I'm a retired
10 principal. I have been in education.
11 I have listened and I have assessed
12 both sides of the issue. I am
13 convinced that what we need is an
14 economic impact in this parish in
15 Vacherie. I am convinced that if we
16 get Petroplex started and we hold them
17 to what they promise that they are
18 going to do. They must be responsible.
19 Then we are in a win/win situation.

20 I can't quote the crude oil and
21 such. I have not worked in a facility.
22 But I can tell you this. I am the
23 scholarship coordinator for the MLK
24 organization. And at our celebration,
25 a representative of Petroplex heard

□

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1 that we award five scholarships every
2 year to students on the westbank to the
3 three high schools: E.D. White, St.
4 James High, and Ascension Academy.
5 Without solicitation, they came forward
6 and volunteered to sponsor a full
7 scholarship for every year. They even
8 promised that they will do more in the
9 future. But like I said, we have to

deqvac

10 hold them to it.

11 At the organization meeting, they
12 sent a letter with that commitment,
13 saying they are committed. I'm saying
14 this to say that we need a facility
15 that's community friendly. It seems to
16 me that Petroplex is trying to get
17 community friendly. And I'm here to
18 say that I support Petroplex.

19 MR. WARD:

20 Robert Faucheax, Jr.

21 MR. ROBERT FAUCHEAX, JR.:

22 I'm Robert Faucheax and I live at
23 745 North Millet Avenue in Gramercy,
24 Louisiana. I'm one of the principals
25 of Petroplex International St. James.

□

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1 Before starting on this endeavor, we
2 had a feasibility study conducted by
3 the Port in south Louisiana that showed
4 that this was a feasible project for
5 the River Parishes. Subsequent to
6 that, we did an economic impact study
7 that showed that the State of Louisiana
8 will benefit by the sum of \$2.7 billion
9 over ten years to the Petroplex
10 project. The River Parish region will
11 benefit for \$1.9 billion. And the
12 other parishes around the state will

deqvac

13 benefit by \$800 million.
14 Petroplex will create 68 direct
15 jobs. During these economic times,
16 that is something that we all need to
17 look forward to. The base salary for
18 these employees will be \$68,000.00.
19 Indirect full-time employment that will
20 be created within the State of
21 Louisiana is 517 jobs over that 10 year
22 period of time. The total construction
23 expenditures for the project as we have
24 proposed will be \$500 million,
25 initially, and up to \$1 billion. The

□

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1 average construction employment will be
2 473 jobs. With total parish revenues
3 impacting at \$42 million over the first
4 10 year period of time. The total
5 state income and sales tax from the
6 project will be \$36 million. The
7 earnings impact to the River region
8 will mean \$392 million to the area.
9 We have employed URS Corporation, which
10 is a world-renowned engineering firm to
11 do the design and the construction
12 phase of the engineering for this
13 project. The air permits that we
14 submitted shows that it is a minor
15 source. That's what we're asking for

deqvac

16 the permits for the 10 million barrels
17 that the request is being made to DEQ
18 for. Air modeling shows that there is
19 no significant impact within this area.
20 The wastewater treatment will be
21 retained on the property, will be
22 treated and will be drained back into
23 the Mississippi River and not into any
24 of the wetlands south of the property.
25 There will be a minimization of

□

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1 environmental impacts from this project
2 because we are going to use state-of-
3 the-art equipment in the design and
4 every aspect that goes into the
5 building of this facility. The latest
6 maximum achievement control technology
7 will be used in this particular
8 project. We will have vapor recovery
9 and vapor construction with thermal
10 oxidizers that will be 99 percent
11 efficient.

12 We will have the most efficient
13 boilers and pumps available for this
14 facility. We have addressed in our
15 application the air, the safety, and
16 the certifications that we intend on
17 getting for the facility are OSHA, VPII
18 certifications. Security we will live

deqvac

19 up to and be accountable to the
20 community for the equipment and
21 infrastructure that is required by
22 homeland security and by the State of
23 Louisiana.

24 The number one asset that we have
25 in the State of Louisiana is the

□

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1 Mississippi River. We have to take
2 advantage of that river and this tank
3 farm is providing for our national
4 security in going into and providing
5 storage so that we can have enough
6 energy to provide for future
7 generations to come.

8 I live within a two-mile area of
9 this, just on the outskirts of this
10 two-mile area. And I can assure you
11 that I love my family just like you and
12 each and every one of you here tonight
13 love your families. And we will make
14 sure this facility is operated at its
15 maximum efficiency and productivity.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. WARD:

18 Lisa Scott.

19 MS. LISA SCOTT:

20 My name is Lisa Scott. I wanted to
21 present you 75 letters of support for
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deqvac

22 Petroplex. Those are people that could
23 not be here tonight or they were here
24 but didn't want to speak. Working with
25 Petroplex in the public relations

□

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1 capacity for the past year has been a
2 great reward. I'm so glad we live in
3 the United States of America. What we
4 are participating in today is a debate.
5 Debates are good. Some are for, some
6 are against. That's why we have a
7 governing board, DEQ. Your job is to
8 enforce the law of this state, whether
9 it's for Petroplex or against
10 Petroplex, you have to make a decision
11 by law. And that's a good thing.

12 There are always three sides to
13 every story: My side, your side, and
14 the truth. So we're going to use DEQ
15 as the truth. Because their decision
16 will make the difference. Throughout
17 the year, we've done things, Mr.
18 Florent mentioned scholarships. We
19 made a commitment to scholarships. We
20 did back-to-school backpacks and school
21 supplies. We participated in National
22 Night Out against crime. We did
23 sponsorship of different youth group
24 projects. We even helped doing

deqvac

25 something for Hurricane Gustav. And

□

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1 what our major concern is children.
2 And I heard some teachers here saying
3 kids were - but Larry was a coach, who
4 is one of the major owners in the
5 company. And his emphasis is education
6 and practically everyone in here's
7 emphasis is education for their kids.
8 we made a commitment and we're going to
9 be visible in the schools here.

10 So all I can say is I'm in support
11 of the project and we have record that
12 we've done things to try to be a good
13 neighbor to the community because
14 basically what Petroplex wants to do is
15 bridge the gap between industry and the
16 community.

17 MR. WARD:

18 Delores Florent.

19 MS. DELORES FLORENT:

20 Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.
21 My name is Delores Florent. I reside
22 at 1225 Luther King Street here in
23 Vacherie, Louisiana. I am the mother
24 of three children, the grandmother o
25 five. No, I don't want anything bad to

□

1 happen to my family because we don't
2 all reside from Hwy 20 to Luther King.
3 My whole family is right here in this
4 area. And I don't want nothing but the
5 best for my family.

6 I feel that Petroplex would improve
7 the quality of life for people in St.
8 James Parish. I too have been in the
9 school system, for 33 years I taught.
10 I have been in contact with fathers who
11 were not able to meet the
12 responsibility of their families for
13 the lack of work in this area. Either
14 because they could not find a job or
15 they could not get to the job. Here is
16 Petroplex, right here in our
17 neighborhood. Some of them can even
18 walk there. How many times are we
19 going to let industry or jobs slip
20 through our fingers here in St. James
21 Parish? We want to make sure that this
22 area does not remain stagnant. We want
23 to move forward with a better living
24 for our people in St. James Parish.

25 I took it upon myself to visit some

□

1 of the people in the area who live near

2 deqvac
3 tank farms. I asked them what was some
4 of the problems that they experience
5 living in this area. I asked was it a
6 noisy thing. They said no. I asked
7 whether it had many odors that they
8 were smelling. They said no. I asked
9 them exactly what are the problems
10 since you live so close to the tank
11 farm. Really, they couldn't give me
12 anything that was a major problem. I
13 spoke to people who work in the
14 industry who know about chemicals and
15 what have you. They said that
16 Petroplex is one of the safest facility
17 that can come into the neighborhood.

18 So I am humbled as I stand here I
19 am proud to live in St. James Parish.
20 I am proud to live in District 6 and I
21 want to see it grow. I want to make
22 sure my children and my grandchildren
23 have a better living whereas their
24 quality of life will be improved
25 because of better salaries from what we
 had when we were coming up. So what is

□

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1 it about, ladies and gentlemen? What
2 is it really about? We would like to
3 see St. James Parish grow and we would
4 like to welcome Petroplex into this

5 neighborhood. Because as my husband
6 said, they did give scholarships. I'm
7 the President and Chairperson of the
8 Martin Luther King scholarship
9 organization and without hesitation
10 they came forward and offered to help.
11 we didn't have to ask them because I
12 have been in the community to ask for
13 help and I could not get it.

14 So I'm just excited tonight to
15 stand and say that I support Petroplex.
16 welcome to St. James Parish.

17 MR. WARD:

18 Next is Pat Sellers.

19 MR. PAT SELLERS:

20 My name is pat Sellers. I live at
21 288 Doral Lane, Laplace, Louisiana.
22 I'm one of the managing partners of
23 Petroplex. Keep it simple because I
24 know people have been here a long time.
25 I'm not here to discuss unvalidated

□

130

1 rhetoric. That's not my cup of tea.
2 But I am here to say basically two
3 things. The first one is: I want to
4 say thanks to so many that have
5 supported us over the last year of our
6 permit process. There are a lot of
7 them here in this audience tonight, and

8 ^{deqvac}
a lot that already had to leave for one
9 reason or another, probably because
10 they have to go to work in the morning.
11 From the elderly to the children,
12 political leaders, community and civic
13 leaders, religious organizations, and
14 community as a whole, I want to say
15 thank you. Personally, I'm saying
16 thank you for supporting us and helping
17 us through that time period.

18 One thing I'll say to Mr. Don
19 Becnel, which I have a lot of respect
20 for. No malice or harm meant to
21 anyone. And, Don, I'm not going to
22 tear up your tires. I promise you
23 that. I know he's already gone. But
24 then second, just basically to say
25 again on behalf of those who supported

□

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1 us that I support this project with the
2 same grit and determination that they
3 have shown us and their support of us.
4 Thank you.

5 MR. WARD:

6 Wilma Subra.

7 MS. WILMA SUBRA:

8 My name is Wilma Subra. I live at
9 106 Oaklawn Drive. These comments are
10 provided on behalf of Louisiana

11 deqvac
Environmental Action Network, Community
12 Strength, and Neil Couvillion. We'd
13 like to submit the following comments
14 are Petroplex Initial Synthetic Minor
15 Source Permit and the Associated
16 Environmental Assessment Statement for
17 the Petroplex Tank Farm and terminal in
18 Vacherie.

19 The air emissions from the
20 Petroplex facility will substantially
21 increase the toxic chemical emissions
22 in St. James Parish. Emissions of not
23 only cancer-causing agents,
24 developmental and reproductive toxins,
25 will increase as much as 357 percent

□

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1 over the current level of toxic
2 emissions in St. James Parish. The
3 synthetic minor source application
4 submitted by Petroplex is very, very
5 close to being a major source and will
6 release 243.3 tons of pollutants into
7 the air on an annual basis. That's
8 243.3 tons on an annual basis.

9 St. James Parish is surrounded by
10 parishes in non-attainment for ozone.
11 In 2008, St. James was listed by DEQ as
12 being in non-attainment for the new
13 2008 ozone standards. However, in

14 degvac
March of 2009, DEQ failed to recommend
15 to EPA that St. James be listed in non-
16 attainment for ozone. Such a listing
17 of non-attainment would have required
18 Petroplex to implement greater air
19 emission controls. DEQ should have
20 designated St. James Parish as a non-
21 attainment area.

22 Petroplex contends that an
23 application for a minor source permit
24 is not required to submit an
25 environmental assessment. Petroplex

□

133

1 also contends that LDEQ is not required
2 to evaluate the environmental
3 assessment in connection with the
4 permit application. Petroplex also has
5 stated that any alleged deficiencies in
6 the environmental assessment cannot be
7 used as grounds by DEQ to deny the
8 permit. However, Petroplex was
9 required by DEQ in October, 2008 to
10 submit the environmental assessment.

11 Based on this requirement, LDEQ has
12 the right and the duty to review their
13 assessment and the deficiencies and
14 information provided by the
15 environmental assessment can be used by
16 LDEQ as grounds to deny the Petroplex

17 deqvac
18 permit application.

19 The site selection process utilized
20 by Petroplex and contained in the
21 environmental assessment is flawed and
22 should be used by DEQ as a basis to
23 deny the project. Two new
24 environmental justice fence-line
25 communities will be created by the
 siting of the Petroplex facility at the

□

134

1 Homeplace location. They are St.
2 Phillips and Simon Subdivision,
3 Magnolia area. Creation of new fence-
4 line communities and an inappropriate
5 and unacceptable result of siting a new
6 industrial facility. The results of
7 creating a new environmental justice
8 fence-line communities are negative
9 environmental, negative human health,
10 negative social, and negative economic
11 impacts and the degradation of the
12 quality of life for those living in the
13 fence-line communities. And I want to
14 point out to the hearing officer that
15 you've heard from a large number of
16 those people living in the new fence-
17 line communities here tonight.

18 The stress level within the fence-
19 line community will be substantially

20 deqvac
increased and occur on a 24-hour basis.
21 Petroplex failed to consider the
22 closeness and the negative impacts on
23 the residential communities that are
24 present here tonight on the fence-line
25 of the proposed facility.

□

135

1 Petroplex also failed to plan for
2 the protection of the fence-line
3 community from the harmful effects of
4 toxic emissions, fires, and explosions.
5 The vulnerable zone created will ascend
6 into both fence-line communities. It
7 will be the flammable vulnerable zones
8 of tanks storing crude and petroleum
9 products. The petroleum facility will
10 threaten the health and well-being of
11 community members living in the two
12 fence-line communities. And these are
13 residential communities. And I heard
14 from speakers that their engineering
15 firm is preparing some data on
16 vulnerable zones.

17 I would request that the hearing
18 and public comment period ends Monday
19 and we have not yet had an opportunity
20 to see or review our comment on that
21 document. So we will have a need to
22 extend the comment period. LDEQ must

23 deqvac
23 consider the negative environmental
24 human health, social, and economic
25 effects of the proposed facility on the

□

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1 environmental justice fence-line
2 community and use those negative
3 impacts as a basis for denying th
4 permit application.
5 Petroplex failed to adequately
6 address the potential and real
7 environmental events associated with
8 its proposed facility. LDEQ failed to
9 evaluate and failed to require
10 Petroplex evaluate the cumulative
11 impacts of the proposed Petroplex
12 emissions in combination with the
13 pollutants released of the operating
14 facilities in the area of the Petroplex
15 facility.

16 I'll stop there and come back at
17 the end. Thank you.

18 MR. WARD:

19 Scott Falgout.

20 (NO RESPONSE.)

21 Dedrick Johnson.

22 (NO RESPONSE.)

23 Bobby Robertson.

24 (NO RESPONSE.)

25 Henry Dufresne.

1 (NO RESPONSE.)

2 Leroy Dufresne.

3 (NO RESPONSE.)

4 Lee Granier.

5 MR. LEE GRANIER:

6 Hello. My name is Lee Granier. My
7 address is 22701 North Oak Street in
8 vacherie. I am opposed to the
9 Petroplex International Storage and
10 Blending facility. Petroplex will be
11 too close to the residential areas and
12 impose a risk to our public safety. As
13 an example, one of the many chemicals
14 Petroplex would store and transport is
15 Benzine. According the NIOSH, the
16 National Institute of Occupational
17 Safety and Health, Benzine, the initial
18 isolation and protective action
19 distance if a tank, railcar, or truck
20 is involved in a fire, isolate for one-
21 half mile in all directions. Also
22 consider evacuating one-half mile in
23 all directions.

24 According to the Petroplex website,
25 their site design and layout example

deqvac

1 for location of their tanks would put
2 the Simon street and St. James Street
3 subdivision and houses along Hwy 18
4 within the initial evacuation distance,
5 one-half mile. This would involve
6 between 50 and 60 homes. One of which
7 is owned by my wife's family. I myself
8 live in the Simon Street subdivision
9 and have many friends who still live.

10 In a time when most of industry in
11 St. James Parish and surrounding
12 parishes are trying to give themselves
13 a larger buffer zone, safety buffer
14 zone, by buying out houses and moving
15 people further away from their
16 industries, Petroplex is seeking to do
17 just the opposite. They are seeking to
18 move industry between two subdivisions,
19 putting them within a recommended
20 initial evacuation distance. I work in
21 the petro-chemical industry. I've
22 worked there for 20 years. I
23 understand what it takes to handle an
24 industrial HAZMAT emergency. The most
25 important job in handling a HAZMAT

□

139

1 emergency is during public safety.

2 I feel that the number of workers
3 who typically operate a tank farm of

deqvac

4 this size would not be adequate to
5 notify and help evacuate all the
6 residents within a half-mile distance
7 of the proposed site. They would be
8 too busy securing their sites, fighting
9 fires, performing continuous
10 monitoring, and notifying all the
11 necessary government agencies that
12 would be notified during an emergency.

13 Putting a facility this close to so
14 many people is putting public at risk.
15 And in addition, the Petroplex site
16 location would put it on the opposite
17 side of the parish in which most of the
18 needed emergency response and aid would
19 come from. Most of the industry is on
20 the other side of the parish. This
21 would only add to the delays in
22 protecting the public. I know petro-
23 chemical facilities are trying their
24 best to prevent accidents, but the
25 truth is accidents do happen. They

□

140

1 have happened. And they will happen in
2 the industry. The most responsible
3 thing a company can do is build their
4 facilities in a safe location away from
5 the public.

6 I am not opposed to industry. Like
Page 126

deqvac

7 I said, I do work in industry. For the
8 reasons stated above, I oppose the
9 Petroplex International facility.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. WARD:

12 Dale Gordon.

13 (NO RESPONSE.)

14 Is there anybody else that I
15 haven't called who would like to speak?
16 If not, I'm going to invite Michael
17 Calabro to come back up and finish his
18 comment.

19 MR. MICHAEL CALABRO:

20 I'm going to jump right back into
21 my speech. I just want to reiterate
22 briefly. One more I ask that you
23 identify the significance of this
24 proposal as a money-making venture. To
25 say that this development has

□

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1 undertaken for the good of the
2 community as much as with the respect
3 of folks that have noted that this
4 evening, I respectfully disagree. In
5 my opinion, when you have an issue such
6 as this that will affect so many of us
7 for relatively nothing and will be
8 referred to as taxes and jobs, it does
9 not add up for me. It does not.

deqvac

10 Regrettably, as we learned in
11 September of 2001, terrorist are
12 looking for new ways to endanger the
13 live of our American citizens. And
14 facilities such as this in such close
15 proximity with the residential
16 community could be a direct impediment
17 to our national security.

18 As presented to the St. James
19 Parish Council on January 21, 2009, it
20 was discovered through in-depth
21 research on the part of Community
22 Strength that several drills had taken
23 place within the parish in relation to
24 catastrophic tank farm related
25 incidents. With data from these

□

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1 exercises not being made readily
2 available to the public. Although our
3 councilmen failed to deem us this
4 information important enough to pursue,
5 I demand here tonight that the LDEQ
6 request documentation on these drills
7 from the St. James Parish Office of
8 Emergency Preparedness. As noted by
9 the Army Corps of Engineers, in January
10 of 1943, a measurable earthquake
11 occurred in St. James Parish, west
12 along Laura Plantation property. 1.4

deqvac

13 miles away from the proposed Petroplex
14 facility. A fisher or crevice five
15 feet wide resulted and geologists
16 concluded that our area is on the flank
17 of a fault zone and is also in the Red
18 River fault zone. This discovery is
19 why Veterans Memorial Bridge now
20 resides two miles down the river and
21 not closer to this particular location.

22 It is also the intention of
23 Petroplex to facilitate high volume
24 capacities off of the river to and from
25 ships and barges. A process that will

□

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1 require extensive alterations to the
2 River Road levee which could
3 potentially cause increased
4 navigational congestion and create
5 various problems when we have high
6 water in the river. We have just seen
7 what an oil barge can do when it
8 crashes and is allowed to spread oil
9 for thousands of miles. We will all be
10 affected by this.

11 Traffic on River Road has always
12 been a problem when discussing the
13 safety of public inhabitants. Hence,
14 the new connector road from the
15 Veterans Memorial Bridge and 3127.

deqvac

16 Petroplex proposes extensive
17 construction that could lead to
18 dangerous roadway activity placing a
19 further strain on our local law
20 enforcement, our firefighters, and our
21 first responder teams.

22 This area of land is also home to a
23 various array of endangered wildlife.
24 Strong endangered species environmental
25 protection laws as well as active

□

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1 private state and federal conservation
2 efforts have brought back our country's
3 bald eagle population from the edge of
4 distinction. Numerous wildlife
5 varieties will be negatively impacted
6 by this proposal. For example, the
7 bald eagle has already noted and the
8 painted indigo budent, a rare species
9 of bird protected both under the IUCN
10 red list and US Migratory Bird Act.

11 Lastly, and least important,
12 property value. There exist no doubt
13 that this will adversely affect the
14 value of our land and homes in the
15 Vacherie community. And the St. James
16 Parish Assessor, Glen Waguespack,
17 agrees with this assessment. He noted
18 as such and I quote "It's hard to

deqvac

19 speculate, but I think it will probably
20 have a negative effect but how much
21 remains to be seen. If you go from an
22 open sugarcane field and then all of a
23 sudden you got tanks, you have more
24 potential to be affected."

25 These are but a few examples into

□

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1 the world forgotten by Petroplex
2 International in their pursuit for an
3 economic windfall. We as a community
4 must awaken from this lengthy slumber
5 and take back what is rightfully ours.
6 A guarantee of safety and well-being
7 for all inhabitants in the water we
8 drink, the air that we breathe, and the
9 soil that we sow. This mission does
10 not end with Petroplex International.
11 For it only just begins. So let us
12 remember that economic development
13 should not be viewed as industry alone,
14 but rather various alternative sources
15 of community growth that will enhance
16 and lengthen residential quality of
17 life. By not measuring such
18 alternatives, we are only doing a
19 disservice to our citizenry through the
20 sacrifice of their overall health and
21 well-being.

deqvac

22 To our parish government, we will
23 no longer sit by and beg for you to
24 protect us. But rather insist that an
25 appropriate, smart growth system is put

□

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1 into effect immediately. To think that
2 any economic development industry or
3 otherwise can come to our parish and
4 dictate protocol is beyond unfortunate
5 and will be tolerated no longer. When
6 a company can get a DEQ permit and make
7 a ground-breaking presentation before
8 our parish council knows anything about
9 it makes absolutely zero sense and
10 should be ashamed of ourselves for
11 allowing such things to occur.

12 To the Louisiana Department of
13 Environmental Quality, I thank you.
14 But I beckon you to take a long and
15 serious look into the many issues
16 presented remembering although you have
17 allowed yourselves to hear the tone of
18 our community, you must now begin to
19 listen to our community. While we will
20 continue to defend ourselves from
21 projects like Petroplex International,
22 I ask that you measure our opposition
23 to this hazardous proposal, not based
24 on the dollars and cents of the

deqvac

25 expedited process, but through the eyes

□

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1 of my two-year old little girl and my
2 unborn son. I thank you for your
3 attention this evening and God bless.
4 I also want to state that this will be
5 submitted to the Record along with
6 1,082 petitioned signatures against
7 Petroplex International.

8 MR. WARD:

9 Matthew Zeringue, would you like to
10 continue your comment?

11 MR. MATTHEW ZERINGUE:

12 Good evening, again. Again, the
13 facts, the toxics, the economics, all
14 very important issues to our community.
15 But when it balls down to it, the one
16 that hurts me the most is the thought
17 of what I'm about to read. "As you
18 well know, Vacherie is quiet community.
19 One that appreciates its tranquility
20 and slower pace of life. We proud
21 ourselves on the fact that our
22 community does not have speeding
23 traffic, large highways, and is not
24 plagued by the noise and light
25 pollution of the cities. In fact, most

□

1 of us can still walk outside at night
2 and gaze in wonderment of a sky full of
3 stars."

4 Now, that might not mean much to
5 many people. But from a young boy who
6 started out being able to do it, to
7 take it away, I know it would feel like
8 to miss it. I don't want the same
9 thing to happen to my son and the
10 future children I hope to have.
11 why did our ancestors chose this
12 community to settle? What was the draw
13 that held our grandparents and parents
14 in this community while others chose to
15 live elsewhere? What is the attraction
16 that would possess someone like myself
17 to return to vacherie to raise my
18 family after living in other areas for
19 the last 10 years? This is home.
20 vacherie is where I grew up. walking
21 outside, looking at Mr. Billy farming
22 the land next to where I live. Just in
23 amazement at the equipment and
24 machinery.

25 The agriculture, watching sugarcane

□

1 grow is what drove me to work in the

2 deqvac
business that I'm in now, working for
3 John Deere. I still get to work with
4 the farmers on a daily basis. I'm
5 still in the soil as my grandfather did
6 farming his whole life and his
7 grandfather did before him. This is
8 also a place I grew up hunting rabbits
9 and doves, riding our horses on the
10 levee. All the while our parents
11 didn't have to worry about my safety
12 and well-being. They knew that we
13 lived in one of those rare towns where
14 folks remain courteous, neighborly, and
15 everything genuinely cared about the
16 people around them.

17 In May of 2003, CBS news published
18 an article about Vacherie. It says,
19 "Vacherie is the least transient town
20 in America. Vacherie, they proclaimed,
21 is a place where 98 percent of the
22 citizens born here remain in the
23 friendly confines of their home."
24 Easily distinguished from national
25 level, only 60 percent of Americans

□

150

1 live in the state where they were born.
2 Clearly this speaks volumes about the
3 spirit of our community and the
4 wonderful folks who inhabit it.

5 deqvac
6 The notion that a tank farm will
7 not destroy this peaceful town or
8 seriously alter our peace of mind is
9 seriously unrealistic. How can you add
10 this much industrial growth and not
11 completely alter the foundation of what
12 we know to be Vacherie. Although, the
13 proposed site is along the river, let
14 us not be so naive to think that South
15 Vacherie would not be affected or even
16 the towns of Lutchter and Gramercy.

17 Just as we smell Gramercy Aluminum,
18 when the breeze is right, you will
19 smell the sour crude with either a
20 north or south wind. Let us also not
21 forget that the land nearest the river
22 is at a higher elevation with a slope
23 towards the swamp and Lake Des
24 Allemands, I understand through
25 research that there exists
 approximately a 9-foot decline from the

□

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1 river to Highway 3127. That's
2 approximately a three mile distance
3 that you have that much of a fall in
4 elevation.

5 Keeping this in mind we must also
6 realize that the runoff of this
7 facility has but one direction to go.

8 degvac
A fact that should concern all of us
9 who care about th preservation of our
10 beautiful lakes and swamps.
11 Now, I heard Petroplex state with my
12 own ears and you did this evening that
13 they will not be sending wastewater
14 into the lake and swamp. They cannot
15 control runoff. Rain will fall on this
16 site. And what residue, chemical or
17 otherwise, that sits on these tanks in
18 and around the grounds will flow, will
19 get into our ditches, our canals. And
20 as I said, with a 9 foot fall, they're
21 going into our lake. They will affect
22 it.
23 Instead, Petroplex has chosen to
24 put their wastewater into the river,
25 which of course if our drinking water.

□

152

1 So not to destroy the wildlife, they
2 have opted for our drinking supply. I
3 fail to see the benefit in this. I
4 also do not support the argument that
5 every plant on this river dumps into it
6 and therefore, they should do the same.
7 Does that make it okay or any less
8 hazardous to our health?
9 Truth be told, there is only
10 worsening the problem we currently face

11 degvac
with the pollution of our Mississippi
12 River. Please take a moment to recall
13 a letter that was published in The
14 News-Examiner and the Enterprise from
15 the parish in the months of October and
16 November, as well as notices posted in
17 these papers that our drinking water is
18 infected with contaminants and although
19 the parish wants to tell us that there
20 exists no reason for concern, the State
21 Department of Health and Hospitals had
22 to notify us of our polluted system.
23 Looking at the fine print, the letter
24 informed us that the drinking water
25 with by-products found in our system

□

153

1 may lead to adverse health effects,
2 liver or kidney problems, or nervous
3 system effects and may lead to an
4 increased risk of cancer.
5 I ask you again. What price must
6 be paid before those with their eyes
7 fix solely on a dollar value for this
8 proposition begin to take notice? What
9 truly frightens me is that by the time
10 the damage is done to our health and
11 more importantly to the health of our
12 children, it will be too late to say,
13 "I told you so." Those who will profit

14 deqvac
14 from this venture will be elsewhere by
15 then, perhaps setting their sites on
16 another beautiful, small town while the
17 town may slowly cripple and destroy
18 will simply wither away without anyone
19 to answer the question "why?" why did
20 you let outsiders come into our homes
21 only to demolish it? why did we not
22 stand up and voice our opinions louder
23 that everyone will hear? why did we
24 not impress upon our elected officials
25 that they represent all of us, not only

□

154

1 those who will financially gain from
2 this project?
3 Knowing that I will have a
4 difficult time explaining this to my
5 son that he and I cannot enjoy the
6 horseback rides through the fields not
7 on the levee, the same way his
8 grandfather and I did when I was
9 growing up. This is a conversation I
10 truly hope never has to occur.
11 So I ask you let the opinions of
12 the vacherie community be heard.
13 Please do not let this injustice
14 destroy what we call home and deny this
15 permit in light of the folks speaking
16 out in opposition as am I to this

17 deqvac
project. Thank you.

18 MR. WARD:

19 Ms. Subra, do you want to finish
20 your comment?

21 MS. WILMA SUBRA:

22 Again, my name is Wilma Subra.
23 Petroplex failed to demonstrate that
24 there was an eve for the proposed
25 facility. Petroplex attempted to

□

155

1 include the acceptance of off-site
2 generated waste by inserting wording in
3 the environmental assessment that they
4 submitted in November of 2008. The
5 acceptance of off-site generate waste
6 at this facility was not included in
7 the air permit application, only
8 included in the environmental
9 assessment. The acceptance of off-site
10 waste to be handled by Petroplex is
11 absolutely not appropriate.

12 Petroplex focused on its economic
13 benefits and you heard that over and
14 over again tonight. They dismissed the
15 environmental impacts. They focused on
16 the economics and dismissed the
17 environmental. Petroplex stated that
18 there are no negative economic impacts.
19 No negative economic impacts. That's

20 deqvac
not what Matt told you about tonight.
21 However, the negative impacts of the
22 facility on the environment and human
23 health are not presented nor evaluated
24 by Petroplex. The negative
25 environmental and human health impacts

□

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1 are being justified on the basis of
2 social and economic benefits.
3 LDEQ must deny the Petroplex
4 application based on the lack of
5 appropriately addressing the true
6 environmental costs and true
7 environmental impacts. The details of
8 these and other issues are provided in
9 the document that I will submit into
10 the Record. As a public trustee, LDEQ
11 has a constitutional duty to determine
12 whether the proposed project fully
13 minimizes the adverse environmental
14 effects. Granting the permit to
15 Petroplex would be contrary to state
16 law and contrary to public policy.
17 LDEQ must deny this permit. And
18 again I will be submitting the details
19 into the Record. Thank you.

20 MR. WARD:

21 Are there any other comments? Just
22 state your name and address for the

23 Record. deqvac

24 MS. PATRICE MITCHELL:

25 My name is Patrice Mitchell. And

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1 I'm against the Petroplex coming to
2 town. Today was our first day really
3 knowing about it. We just received a
4 notice in the mailbox, so I'm trying to
5 understand where is the newspaper
6 clippings of such a thing coming to the
7 area? I don't know why articles or
8 submissions to the neighbors and
9 residents wasn't submitted to us to let
10 us know that this particular site is
11 available to this project and why have
12 we not been notified of it until today.

13 I see a lot of people had a chances
14 to write letters and write books and
15 this is my first day knowing about it.
16 So I am trying to figure out who I need
17 to talk to to find out information
18 about this because I have a son who has
19 sickle cell. And I don't think y'all
20 really know what that means. That
21 means endless nights in the hospital,
22 endless days missing school, losing
23 your job because you cannot hold down a
24 job because you're always in the
25 hospital due to him having asthma.

1 I'm living in the country for a
2 reason. I can open my windows and
3 listen to the birds, feel the breeze.
4 Y'all putting this here, I won't be
5 able to do that. I knew the guy that
6 died at Marathon. I saw him on the
7 weekend, by Wednesday he was dead.
8 Five minutes the guys went to lunch,
9 they were calling him back. Just that
10 fast, he was gone. Today they're
11 taking time off because they can't deal
12 with it.

13 Now, for the lady that said she
14 talked to the neighbors surrounding the
15 plants and the nosie and she didn't
16 hear anything or they didn't hear
17 anything, smell anything, I want you to
18 talk to me. I work at Marathon. The
19 smell is horrendous. Some tanks we
20 don't even know what they are providing
21 there. One particular place nobody
22 wants to work because they can't stand
23 there three hours without no effect.

24 It's time for us to wake up. I
25 know the economy is great. It's going

deqvac

1 to bring money. It's gonna bring jobs.
2 Guess what? It's not going to bring
3 many because you need a card to get
4 into these place. You have a felony,
5 you will not be working at this
6 complex. So what jobs is it gonna
7 bring? white collar jobs, all of them
8 have them. But it won't bring anything
9 to our community but traffic, endless
10 hours of traffic. They done gave us an
11 extra duty to do but not no extra pay.
12 I work traffic. To hold down the
13 traffic, I got to be to work at 5:00
14 o'clock in the morning. I don't know
15 how they can handle that. They can't
16 handle it.

17 And that's why I'm not sitting down
18 in my sit today. Because if I sit
19 down, then I'm for it. I'm not for it,
20 I'm against it. My son has been away
21 from me for eight years. He's just
22 about to come out and y'all telling me
23 this is about to come to my community
24 and this is my first day hearing about
25 it. So we're here for opinions. We're

□

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1 for or against it. But sounds like
2 y'all already got the plans in the
3 works that y'all about to build

deqvac

4 tomorrow. How can it happen? We
5 telling you no we don't want it to
6 happen. Y'all telling us it's coming
7 anyway. What are we sitting here for?
8 And we're saying yes or no and y'all
9 telling us it's coming regardless.
10 How? Where do y'all live? It's
11 not coming to your community. It's
12 coming to ours, or you're trying to put
13 it to ours. How? Again, voting. Our
14 voice don't mean nothing? We're just
15 here for our health? Why do we waste
16 our time staying here until 10:00
17 o'clock tonight to tell y'all we're
18 against it and y'all gonna put it in
19 our backyard anyway.
20 But y'all going home. Maybe, to
21 Texas, Dallas. I don't know. I'm
22 trying to understand. Y'all are behind
23 the desk with y'all pens writing down
24 everything y'all need to write, but
25 y'all are going back. Y'all done made

□

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1 your decision already.
2 But y'all not listening to the
3 voices. That's been going on for so
4 long. Voting for the President. Going
5 on for so long. We're here tonight to
6 tell y'all we don't want it here. If

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7 you got to, bring it to an open field
8 where there's nobody surrounding it.
9 It's not gonna affect nobody. I don't
10 want to have to drink Kentwood for the
11 rest of my life.

12 Marathon is the biggest oil
13 refinery around here. And everyday
14 they are taking land just like that.
15 And y'all telling us that it's just
16 small. It looks small on that paper.
17 It really does. But when y'all start
18 building, it's going to be a big
19 something and all those houses and that
20 water and all of that, that's going to
21 be gone. I work there. Noise, the
22 smell, the people, I endure it
23 everyday.

24 So I don't know where y'all getting
25 your information from and where they

□

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1 said they talk to the people at. I'm
2 working there because it's already
3 existing. Y'all trying to bring
4 something in existence. We don't want
5 it. We can go work outside the limits.
6 That's what we do everyday. We come to
7 our nest egg to have a peace of mind,
8 to have tranquility. But y'all about
9 to take that away. We won't be able to

deqvac

10 look at the Young and the Restless
11 indecence because of this. Y'all
12 telling us it's already decided.
13 That's the sad part. So our voice
14 today doesn't mean anything.
15 It's past some of these people's
16 bedtime. And they out here because
17 they don't want it in their community.
18 But they trying to give y'all a voice
19 to tell y'all they don't want it. I
20 don't know how many dollars y'all
21 through out and all of that's good
22 because I see y'all giving out
23 scholarships and all of that. I'm
24 going to come to y'all because I have a
25 foundation that I need funding too.

□

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1 But I'm still telling you I'm against
2 it. Now y'all can tell me, no, because
3 I'm against it. I'm still coming to
4 y'all because I see y'all do help the
5 community. So are you helping just
6 because their for it or when they
7 against it too? So I'll be giving
8 y'all a call. My name is Patrice
9 Mitchell. Y'all shall hear from me.
10 "Let us keep hope alive for the kids."
11 That's the name of my foundation and I
12 will be getting in touch with you.

deqvac

13 MR. WARD:

14 Is there anyone else who would like
15 to speak? Please state your name for
16 the Record.

17 MR. JOSEPH CHRISTIAN:

18 My name is Joseph Christian. I've been
19 living in St. James Parish for about 33
20 years. I understand and sympathize
21 with the opposition, but I am for
22 Petroplex. As far as the chemical
23 emissions and everything that we
24 believe and understand that the plants
25 emit, talking about farming, according

□

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1 to the things that I've read. The
2 pollution, the DDT, what's that other
3 one's name that killed all the snakes
4 and everything, 24D. A lot of that
5 soaked into the ground from the
6 farming. It's now in the soil in
7 Louisiana. It's come down that far
8 from what I understand.

9 That's what I read in the doctor's
10 office, Dr. Waguespack's office. And I
11 do know a lot of the birds, the snakes,
12 in the field are all gone. I think due
13 to DDT, 24D. I can understand the
14 concern about the chemicals and the
15 destruction of the air quality and

deqvac

16 everything, but a lot of these things
17 are just you, your job is to oversee
18 the majority of this. And I have
19 worked in the industry for 25 years or
20 so. I used to work for Volten Chemical
21 Company across the river soon after
22 high school. They were notorious. But
23 they got it together.
24 I can only say that the dangers are
25 real. I will make it short and I do

□

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1 think that we have to try and live with
2 industry. I don't know that nobody
3 came up with a substitute to put in the
4 tank of the cars yet. The jobs we
5 need. Everybody has to live. You can
6 also die from starvation if you don't
7 work. I support Petroplex because I
8 support industry. We progress. And I
9 just hope that we all make it. We're
10 going to have to make some sacrifices.
11 Somebody's gonna have to make them. I
12 don't know what else to say. Thank you
13 for your time.

14 MR. WARD:

15 Is there anybody else who would
16 like to comment.

17 (NO VERBAL RESPONSE.)

18 I would like to remind you that
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deqvac

19 the comment period of this proposed
20 Initial Synthetic Minor Source Air
21 Permit and the Associated Environmental
22 Assessment Statement (EAS) for
23 Petroplex International, LLC, Petroplex
24 International Tank Farm (Greenfield
25 Sit) ends at 12:30 p.m., Monday, March

□

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1 30, 2009.

2 All comments received, requests for
3 notification of the final decision and
4 the transcript from the hearing are
5 processed by the Public participation
6 Group and are available on EDMS.

7 The permit writer reviews all
8 comments and uses any additional
9 information that is appropriate to
10 update the draft permit.

11 The names and addresses of all
12 commentors, speakers and those
13 requesting to be notified of the final
14 decision are added to the Public
15 Comment Database.

16 A final revision of the draft
17 permit and the response to the public
18 comments are prepared and forwarded to
19 the LDEQ, OES, Assistant Secretary for
20 final decision.

21 Upon the issuance or denial of the
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deqvac

22 permit, a letter is mailed to all the
23 commentors, speakers and those who
24 requested to be notified of the final
25 decision. The final decision letter

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1 includes information regarding the
2 appeal process, the basis of decision
3 and the response to all the public
4 comments received.

5 I have received a total of 18
6 exhibits during this hearing regarding
7 the Proposed Permit and the Associated
8 EAS for Petroplex International, LLC.

9 If there are no other comments, I
10 would like to thank you for your
11 attention and participation in this
12 hearing.

13 Let the Record reflect that the
14 time is now 9:40 p.m. This hearing is
15 closed. Thank you.

16 (The proceedings concluded at 9:40 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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This certification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original raised seal on this page.

That this testimony was reported by me in the Stenomask method (voice-writing), was prepared and transcribed by me or under my personal direction and supervision, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding;

That I am not related to counsel or to the parties herein; am not otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter; and am a valid member in good standing of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Certified Shorthand Reporters.

Tiffeny Suire Gallardo
Certified Court Reporter
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□